

THE
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Put Yourself in His Place.

CHAPTER XLII.



"**B**ETTER for me if I had, then I could chop and change from one to another as you would have me. No, mother; I daresay if I had never seen Grace I should have loved Jael. As it is, I have a great affection and respect for her, but that is all."

"And those would ripen into love if once you were married."

"They might. If it came to her flinging that great arm round my neck in kindness, she once shaved my life with by brute force, I suppose a man's heart could not resist her. But it will never come to that while my darling lives.

She is my lover, and Jael my sister and my dear friend. God bless her! and may she be as happy as she deserves. I wish I could get a word with her: but that seems out of the question to-night; I shall slip away to bed and my own sad thoughts."

With this he retired unobserved.

In the morning he asked Jael if she would speak to him alone.

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"Why not?" said she, calmly.

They took a walk in the shrubbery.

"I tried hard to get a word with you yesterday, but you were so taken up with that puppy."

"He is very good company."

"I have seen the time when I was as good; but it is not so easy to chatter with a broken heart."

"That is true. Please come to the point and tell me what you want of me now."

This was said in such a curious tone, that Henry felt quite discouraged.

He hesitated a moment and then said, "What is the matter with you? You are a changed girl to me. There's something about you so cold and severe; it makes me fear I have worn out my friend as well as lost my love; if it is so, tell me, and I will not intrude my sorrow any more on you."

There was a noble and manly sadness in the way he said this, and Jael seemed touched a little by it.

"Mr. Henry," said she, "I'll be frank with you. I can't forgive you leaving the factory that night without saying a word to me; and, if you consider what I had done before you used me so, and what I suffered in consequence of your using me so—not that you will ever know all I suffered, at least I hope not—no, I have tried to forgive you; for, if you are a sinner, you are a sufferer—but it is no use, I can't. I never shall forgive you to my dying day."

Henry Little hung his head dejectedly. "That is bad news," he faltered. "I told you why I did not bid you good-by except by letter: it was out of kindness. I have begged your pardon for it all the same. I thought you were an angel: but I see you are only a woman; you think the time to hit a man is when he is down. Well, I can but submit. Good-by. Stay one moment, let me take your hand, you won't refuse me that." She did not deign a word; he took her hand and held it. "This is the hand and arm that worked with me like a good mate: this is the hand and arm that overpowered a blackguard and saved me: this is the hand and arm that saved my Grace from a prison and public shame. I must give them both one kiss, if they knock me down for it. There—there—good-by, dear Jael, good-by! I seem to be letting go the last thing I have to cling to in the deep waters of trouble."

Melted by this sad thought, he held his best friend's hand till a warm tear dropped on it. That softened her; the hand, to which he owed so much, closed on his and detained him.

"Stay where you are. I have told you my mind, but I shall act just as I used to do. I'm not proud of this spite I have taken against you, don't you fancy that. There—there, don't let us fret about what can't be helped; but just tell me what I can do for you."

Young Little felt rather humiliated at assistance being offered on these terms. He did not disguise his mortification.

"Well," said he, rather sullenly, "beggars must not be choosers. Of course I wanted you to tell me where I am likely to find her?"

"I don't know."

"But you left Hillsborough with her?"

"Yes, and went to York. But there I left her, and she told me she should travel hundreds of miles from York. I have no notion where she is."

Little sighed. "She could not trust even you."

"The fewer one trusts with a secret the better."

"Will she never return? Will she give up her father as well as me? Did she fix no time? Did she give you no hint?"

"No, not that I remember. She said that depended on you."

"On me?"

"Yes."

Here was an enigma.

They puzzled over it a long time. At last Jael said, "She wrote a letter to you before she left: did she say nothing in that? Have you got the letter?"

"Have I got it? The last letter my darling ever wrote to me! Do you think it ever leaves me night or day?"

He undid one of his studs, put his hand inside, and drew the letter out warm from his breast. He kissed it and gave it to Jael. She read it carefully and looked surprised. "Why, you are making your own difficulties. You have only got to do what you are told. Promise not to fall foul of that Coventry, and not to tempt her again, and you will hear of her. You have her own word for it."

"But how am I to let her know I promise?"

"I don't know; how does everybody let everybody know things now-a-days? they advertise."

"Of course they do—in the second column of *The Times*."

"You know best." Then, after a moment's reflection, "Wherever she is she takes in the Hillsborough papers, to see if there's anything about you in them."

"Oh, do you think so?"

"Think so? I am sure of it. I put myself in her place."

"Then I will advertise in *The Times* and the Hillsborough papers."

He went into the library and wrote several advertisements. This is the one Jael preferred:—

"H. L. to G. C. I see you are right. There shall be no vengeance except what the law may give me, nor will I ever renew that request which offended you so justly. I will be patient."

He had added an entreaty that she would communicate with him, but this Jael made him strike out. She thought that might make Grace suspect his sincerity. "Time enough to put that in, a month hence, if you don't hear from her."

This was all I think worth recording in the interview between Jael and Henry, except that at parting he thanked her warmly, and said, "May I give you one piece of advice in return? Mr. Richard Raby has fallen in love with you, and no wonder. If my heart was not full of Grace I should have fallen in love with you myself, you are so good and so beautiful; but he bears a bad character. You are wise in other people's affairs, pray don't be foolish in your own."

"Thank you," said Jael, a little drily. "I shall think twice before I give my affections to any young man."

Henry had a word with his mother before he went, and begged her not to prepare disappointment for herself by trying to bring Jael and him together. "Besides, she has taken a spite against me. To be sure it is not very deep; for she gave me good advice, and I advised her not to throw herself away on Dissolute Dick."

Mrs. Little smiled knowingly and looked very much pleased, but she said nothing more just then. Henry Little returned to Hillsborough, and put his advertisement in *The Times* and the Hillsborough journals.

Two days afterwards, Ransome called on him, with the *Hillsborough Liberal*. "Is this yours?" said Ransome.

"Yes. I have reason to think she will write to me, if she sees it."

"Would you mind giving me your reason?"

Little gave it, but with so much reticence, that no other man in Hillsborough but Ransome would have understood.

"Hum!" said he, "I think I can do something with this."

A period of expectation succeeded, hopeful at first, and full of excitement; but weeks rolled on without a word from the fugitive, and Little's heart sickened with hope deferred. He often wished to consult Jael Dence again; he had a superstitious belief in her sagacity. But the recollection of her cold manner deterred him. At last, however, impatience and the sense of desolation conquered, and he rode over to Raby Hall.

He found his uncle and his mother in the dining-room. Mr. Raby was walking about looking vexed, and even irritable.

The cause soon transpired. Dissolute Dick was at that moment in the drawing-room, making hot love to Jael Dence. He had wooed her ever since that fatal evening when she burst on society full-blown. Raby, too proud and generous to forbid his addresses, had nevertheless been always bitterly averse to them, and was now in a downright rage; for Mrs. Little had just told him she felt sure he was actually proposing.

"Confound him!" said Henry, "and I wanted so to speak to her."

Raby gave him a most singular look, that struck him as odd at the time, and recurred to him afterwards.

At last steps were heard overhead, and Dissolute Dick came downstairs.

Mrs. Little slipped out, and soon after put her head into the dining-room to the gentlemen, and whispered to them "yes." Then she retired to talk it all over with Jael.

At that monosyllable Mr. Raby was very much discomposed.

"There goes a friend out of this house; more fools we. You have lost her by your confounded folly. What is the use spooning all your days after another man's wife? I wouldn't have had this happen for ten thousand pounds. Dissolute Dick! he will break her heart in a twelvemonth."

"Then why, in heaven's name, didn't you marry her yourself?"

"Me! at my age? No; why didn't *you* marry her? You know she fancies you. The moment you found Grace married, you ought to have secured this girl, and lived with me; the house is big enough for you all."

"It is not so big as your heart, sir," said Henry. "But pray don't speak to me of love or marriage either."

"Why should I? The milk is spilt; it is no use crying now. Let us go and dress for dinner. Curse the world—it is one disappointment."

Little himself was vexed, but he determined to put a good face on it, and to be very kind to his good friend Jael.

She did not appear at dinner, and when the servants had retired, he said, "Come now, let us make the best of it. Mother, if you don't mind, I will settle five thousand pounds upon her and her children. He is a spendthrift, I hear, and as poor as Job."

Mrs. Little stared at her son. "Why, she has refused him."

Loud exclamations of surprise and satisfaction!

"A fine fright you have given us. You said, 'Yes.'"

"Well, that meant he had proposed. You know, Guy, I had told you he would: I saw it in his eye. So I observed, in a moment, he *had*, and I said, 'Yes.'"

"Then why doesn't she come down to dinner?"

"He has upset her. It is the old story: he cried to her, and told her he had been wild, and misconducted himself, all because he had never met a woman he could really love and respect; and then he begged her, and implored her, and said his fate depended on her."

"But she was not caught with that chaff; so why does she not come and receive the congratulations of the company on her escape?"

"Because she is far too delicate;" then, turning to her son, "and, perhaps, because she can't help comparing the manly warmth and loving appreciation of Mr. Richard Raby with the cold indifference and ingratitude of others."

"Oh," said Henry, colouring, "if that is her feeling, she will accept him next time."

"Next time!" roared Raby. "There shall be no next time. I have given the scamp fair play, quite against my own judgment. He has got his answer now, and I won't have the girl tormented with him any more. I trust that to you, Edith."

Mrs. Little promised him Dick and Jael should not meet again, in Raby Hall at least.

That evening she drew her son apart and made an earnest appeal to him.

"So much for her spite against you, Henry. You told her to decline

Richard Raby, and so she declined him. Spite, indeed! The gentle pique of a lovely, good girl, who knows her value, though she is too modest to show it openly. Well, Henry, you have lost her a husband, and she has given you one more proof of affection. Don't build the mountain of ingratitude any higher: do pray take the cure that offers, and make your mother happy, as well as yourself, my son." In this strain she continued, and used all her art, her influence, her affection, till at last, with a weary heart-broken sigh, he yielded as far as this; he said that, if it could once be made clear to him there was no hope of his ever marrying Grace Carden, he would wed Jael Dence at once.

Then he ordered his trap, and drove sullenly home, while Mrs. Little, full of delight, communicated her triumph to Jael Dence, and told her about the five thousand pounds, and was as enthusiastic in praise of Henry to Jael, as she had been of Jael to Henry.

Meantime he drove back to Hillsborough, more unhappy than ever, and bitter against himself for yielding, even so far, to gratitude and maternal influence.

It was late when he reached home: he let himself in with a latch-key, and went into his room for a moment.

A letter lay on the table, with no stamp on it: he took it up. It contained but one line; that line made his heart leap.

"News of G. C.

"RANSOME."

CHAPTER XLIII.

LATE as it was, Little went to the Town Hall directly. But there, to his bitter disappointment, he learned that Mr. Ransome had been called to Manchester by telegram. Little had nothing to do but to wait, and eat his heart with impatience. However, next day, towards afternoon, Ransome called on him at the works, in considerable excitement, and told him a new firm had rented large business premises in Manchester, obtained goods, insured them in the "Gosshawk," and then the premises had caught fire, and the goods been burnt to ashes: suspicions had been excited; Mr. Carden had gone to the spot, and telegraphed for him. He had met a London detective there, and, between them, they had soon discovered that full cases had come in by day, but full sacks gone out by night: the ashes also revealed no trace of certain goods the firm had insured. "And now comes the clue to it all. Amongst the few things that survived the fire was a photograph—of whom do you think? Shifty Dick. The dog had kept his word, and gone into trade."

"Confound him!" said Little: "he is always crossing my path, that fellow. You seem quite to forget that all this time I am in agonies of suspense. What do I care about Shifty Dick? He is nothing to me."

"Of course not. I am full of the fellow: a little more, and he'll

make a monomaniac of me. Mr. Carden offers 200*l.* for his capture; and we got an inkling he was coming this way again. There, there, I won't mention his name to you again. Let us talk of what *will* interest you. Well, sir, have you observed that you are followed and watched?"

"No."

"I am glad of it; then it has been done skilfully. You have been closely watched this month past by my orders."

This made young Little feel queer. Suppose he had attempted anything unlawful, his good friend here would have collared him.

"You'll wonder that a good citizen like you should be put under surveillance; but I thought it likely your advertisement would either make the lady write to you, or else draw her back to the town. She didn't write, so I had you watched, to see if anybody took a sly peep at you. Well, this went on for weeks, and nothing turned up. But the other night a young woman walked several times by your house, and went away with a sigh. She had a sort of Protestant nun's dress on, and a thick veil. Now you know Mr. Carden told you she was gone into a convent. I am almost sure it is the lady."

Little thanked him with all his soul, and then inquired eagerly where the nun lived.

"Ah, my man didn't know that. Unfortunately, he was on duty in the street, and had no authority to follow anybody. However, if you can keep yourself calm, and obey orders——"

"I will do anything you tell me."

"Well, then, this evening, as soon as it is quite dark, you do what I have seen you do in happier times. Light your reading-lamp, and sit reading close to the window; only you must not pull down the blind. Lower the venetians, but don't turn them so as to hide your face from the outside. You must promise me faithfully not to move under any circumstances, or you would be sure to spoil all."

Little gave the promise, and performed it to the letter. He lighted his lamp, and tried to read book after book; but, of course, he was too agitated to fix his attention on them. He got all Grace's letters, and read them; and it was only by a stern effort he kept still at all.

The night wore on, and heart-sickness was beginning to succeed to feverish impatience, when there was a loud knock at the door. Little ran to it himself, and found a sergeant of police, who told him in a low voice he brought a message from the chief constable.

"I was to tell you it is all right; he is following the party himself. He will call on you at twelve to-morrow morning."

"Not before that?" said Little. However, he gave the sergeant a sovereign, for good news, and then, taking his hat, walked twenty miles out of Hillsborough, and back, for he knew it was useless his going to bed, or trying to settle to anything.

He got back at ten o'clock, washed, breakfasted, and dozed on two chairs, till Ransome came, with a carpet-bag in his hand.

"Tell me all about it: don't omit anything." This was Little's greeting.

"Well, sir, she passed the house about nine o'clock, walking quickly; and took just one glance in at your window, but did not stop. She came back in half an hour, and stood on the opposite side of the way, and then passed on. I hid in a court, where she couldn't see me. By and by she comes back, on your side the way this time, gliding like a cat, and she crouched and curled round the angle of the house, and took a good look at you. Then she went slowly away, and I passed her. She was crying bitterly, poor girl. I never lost sight of her, and she led me a dance, I can tell you. I'll take you to the place; but you had better let me disguise you; for I can see she is very timid, and would fly away in a moment, if she knew she was detected."

Little acquiesced, and Ransome disguised him in a beard, and a loose set of clothes, and a billy-cock hat, and said that would do, as long as he kept at a prudent distance from the lady's eye. They then took a cab and drove out of Hillsborough. When they had proceeded about two miles up the valley, Ransome stopped the cab, and directed the driver to wait for them.

He then walked on, and soon came to a row of houses, in two blocks of four houses each.

The last house of the first block had a bill in the window, "To be let furnished."

He then knocked at the door, and a woman in charge of the house opened it.

"I am the Chief Constable of Hillsborough: and this is my friend Mr. Park; he is looking out for a furnished house. Can he see this one?"

The woman said, "Certainly, gentlemen," and showed them over the house.

Ransome opened the second-story window, and looked out on the back garden.

"Ah," said he, "these houses have nice long gardens in the rear, where one can walk and be private."

He then nudged Henry, and asked the woman who lived in the first house of the next block; "the house that garden belongs to?"

"Why, the bill was in the window the other day; but it is just took. She is a kind of a nun, I suppose: keeps no servant; only a girl comes in and does for her, and goes home at night. I saw her yesterday, walking in the garden there. She seems rather young to be all alone like that; but perhaps there's some more of 'em coming. They sort o' cattle mostly goes in bands."

Henry asked what was the rent of the house. The woman did not know, but told him the proprietor lived a few doors off. "I shall take this house," said Little. "I think you are right," observed Ransome: "it will just answer your purpose." They went together, and took the

house directly ; and Henry, by advice of Ransome, engaged a woman to come into the house in the morning, and go away at dusk. Ransome also advised him to make arrangements for watching Grace's garden unseen. "That will be a great comfort to you," said he : "I know by experience. Above all things," said this sagacious officer, "don't you let her know she is discovered. Remember this : when she wants you to know she is here, she'll be sure to let you know. At present she is here on the sly ; so, if you thwart her, she'll be off again as sure as fate."

Little was forced to see the truth of this, and promised to restrain himself, hard as the task was. He took the house ; and used to let himself into it with a latch-key at about ten o'clock every night.

There he used to stay and watch, till past noon : and nearly every day he was rewarded by seeing the Protestant nun walk in her garden.

He was restless and miserable, till she came out : when she appeared his heart bounded and thrilled ; and when once he had feasted his eyes upon her, he would go about the vulgar affairs of life pretty contentedly.

By advice of Ransome, he used to sit in his other house from seven till nine, and read at the window; to afford his beloved a joy similar to that he stole himself.

And such is the power of true love that these furtive glances soothed two lives. Little's spirits revived, and some colour came back to Grace's cheek.

One night there was a house broken into in the row.

Instantly Little took the alarm, on Grace's account, and bought powder and bullets, and a double-barrelled rifle, and a revolver ; and now, at the slightest sound, he would be out of bed in a moment, ready to defend her, if necessary.

Thus they both kept their hearts above water, and Grace visited the sick, and employed her days in charity ; and then, for a reward, crept, with soft foot, to Henry's window, and devoured him with her eyes, and fed on that look for hours afterwards.

When this had gone on for nearly a month, Lally, who had orders to keep his eye on Mr. Little, happened to come by and see Grace looking in at him.

He watched her at a distance, but had not the intelligence to follow her home. He had no idea it was Grace Carden.

However, in his next letter to his master, who was then in London, he told him Little always read at night, by the window, and one night a kind of nun had come and taken a very long look at him, and gone away crying. "I suspect," said Lally, "she has played the fool with him some time or other, before she was a nun."

He was not a little surprised when his master telegraphed in reply that he would be down by the first train : but, the fact is, that Coventry had already called on Mr. Carden, and been told that his wife was in a convent, and he would never see her again. I must add that Mr. Carden received him as roughly as he had Little, but the interview terminated differently.

Coventry, with his winning tongue, and penitence, and plausibility, softened the indignant father, and then, appealing to his good sense, extorted from him the admission that his daughter's only chance of happiness lay in forgiving him, and allowing him to atone his faults by a long life of humble devotion. But when Coventry, presuming on this, implored him to reveal where she was, the old man stood staunch, and said that was told him under a solemn assurance of secrecy, and nothing should induce him to deceive his daughter. "I will not lose her love and confidence, for any of you," said he.

So now Coventry put that word "convent" and this word "nun" together, and came to Hillsborough full of suspicions.

He took lodgings nearly opposite Little's house, and watched, in a dark room, so persistently, that, at last, he saw the nun appear, saw her stealthy, cat-like approaches, her affected retreat, her cunning advance, her long lingering look.

A close observer of women, he saw in every movement of her supple body that she was animated by love.

He raged and sickened with jealousy, and when, at last, she retired, he followed her, with hell in his heart, and never lost sight of her till she entered her house in the valley.

If there had been a house to let in the terrace, he would certainly have taken it; but Little had anticipated him.

He took a very humble lodging in the neighbourhood; and, by dint of watching, he at last saw the nun speaking to a poor woman with her veil up. It revealed to him nothing but what he knew already. It was the woman he loved, and she hated him; the woman who had married him under a delusion, and stabbed him on his bridal day. He loved her all the more passionately for that.

Until he received Lally's note, he had been content to wait patiently until his rival should lose hope, and carry himself and his affections elsewhere; he felt sure that must be the end of it.

But now jealousy stung him wild, passion became too strong for reason, and he resolved to play a bold and lawless game, to possess his lawful wife. Should it fail, what could they do to him? A man may take his own by force. Not only his passions, but the circumstances tempted him. She was actually living alone, in a thinly-peopled district, and close to a road. It was only to cover her head, and stifle her cries, and fly with her to some place prepared beforehand, where she would be brought to submission by kindness of manner combined with firmness of purpose.

Coventry possessed every qualification to carry out such a scheme as this. He was not very courageous; yet he was not a coward; and no great courage was required. Cunning, forethought, and unscrupulousness were the principal things, and these he had to perfection.

He provided a place to keep her: it was a shooting-box of his own, on a heathery hill, that nobody visited except for shooting, and the season for shooting was passed.

He armed himself with false certificates of lunacy, to show on an emergency, and also a copy of his marriage certificate: he knew how unwilling strangers are to interfere between man and wife.

The only great difficulty was to get resolute men to help him in this act.

He sounded Cole; but that worthy objected to it, as being out of his line.

Coventry talked him over, and offered a sum that made him tremble with cupidity. He assented, on one condition, that he should not be expected to break into the house, nor do any act that could be "construed burglarious." He actually used that phrase, which I should hardly have expected from him.

Coventry assented to this condition. He undertook to get into the house, and open the door to Cole and his myrmidons: he stipulated, however, that Cole should make him a short iron ladder with four sharp prongs. By means of this he could enter Grace's house at a certain unguarded part, and then run down and unbar the front door. He had thoroughly reconnoitred the premises, and was sure of success.

First one day was appointed for the enterprise, then another, and, at last, it was their luck to settle on a certain night, of which I will only say at present, that it was a night Hillsborough and its suburbs will not soon forget.

Midnight was the hour agreed on.

Now at nine o'clock of this very night the chief constable of Hillsborough was drinking tea with Little scarcely twenty yards from the scene of the proposed abduction. Not that either he or Little had the least notion of the conspiracy. The fact is, Hillsborough had lately been deluged with false coin, neatly executed, and passed with great dexterity. The police had received many complaints, but had been unable to trace it. Lately, however, an old bachelor, living in this suburban valley, had complained to the police that his neighbours kept such enormous fires all night, as to make his wall red-hot and blister his paint.

This, and one or two other indications, made Ransome suspect the existence of a furnace, and he had got a search-warrant in his pocket, on which, however, he did not think it safe to act, till he had watched the suspected house late at night, and made certain observations for himself. So he had invited himself to tea with his friend Little—for he was sure of a hearty welcome at any hour—and, over their tea, he now told him his suspicions, and invited him to come and take a look at the suspected house with him.

Little consented. But there was no hurry: the later they went to the house in question the better. So they talked of other matters, and the conversation soon fell on that which was far more interesting to Little than the capture of all the coiners in creation.

He asked Ransome how long he was to go on like this, contenting himself with the mere sight of her,

"Why," said Ransome, "even that has made another man of you. Your eye is twice as bright as it was a month ago, and your colour is coming back. That is a wise proverb, 'Let well alone.' I hear she visits the sick, and some of them swear by her. I think I'd give her time to take root here; and then she will not be so ready to fly off in a tangent."

Little objected that it was more than flesh and blood could bear.

"Well, then," said Ransome, "promise me just one thing: that, if you speak to her, it shall be in Hillsborough, and not down here."

Little saw the wisdom of this, and consented, but said he was resolved to catch her at his own window the next time she came.

He was about to give his reasons, but they were interrupted by a man and horse clattering up to the door.

"That will be for me," said Ransome. "I thought I should not get leave to drink my tea in peace."

He was right; a mounted policeman brought him a note from the mayor telling him word had come into the town that there was something wrong with Ouseley dam. He was to take the mayor's horse, and ride up at once to the reservoir, and, if there was any danger, to warn the valley.

"This looks serious," said Ransome. "I must wish you good-by."

"Take a piece of advice with you. I hear that dam is too full; if so, don't listen to advice from anybody, but open the sluices of the waste-pipes, and relieve the pressure; but if you find a flaw in the embankment, don't trifl, blow up the waste-weir at once with gunpowder. I wish I had a horse, I'd go with you. By the way, if there is the least danger of that dam bursting, of course you will give me warning in time, and I'll get her out of the house at once."

"What, do you think the water would get as far as this, to do any harm? It is six miles."

"It might. Look at the form of the ground; it is a regular trough from that dam to Hillsborough. My opinion is, it would sweep everything before it, and flood Hillsborough itself—the lower town. I shall not go to bed, old fellow, till you come back and tell me it is all right."

With this understanding Ransome galloped off. On his way he passed by the house where he suspected coining. The shutters were closed, but his experienced eye detected a bright light behind one of them, and a peculiar smoke from the chimney.

Adding this to his other evidence, he now felt sure the inmates were coiners, and he felt annoyed. "Fine I look," said he, "walking tamely past criminals at work, and going to a mayor's-nest six miles off."

However, he touched the horse with his heel, and cantered forward on his errand.

John Ransome rode up to the Ouseley Reservoir, and down again, in less than an hour and a half; and every incident of those two rides is imprinted on his memory for life,

He first crossed the water at Poma bridge. The village of that name lay on his right, towards Hillsborough, and all the lights were out except in the two public-houses. One of these, "The Reindeer," was near the bridge, and from it a ruddy glare shot across the road, and some boon companions were singing, in very good harmony, a trite Scotch chorus,—

" We are no that fou, we are no that fou,
But just a drappie in our ee ;
The cock may craw, the day may daw',
But still we'll taste the barley bree."

Ransome could hear the very words ; he listened, laughed, and then rode up the valley till he got opposite a crinoline-wire factory called the "Kildare Wheel." Here he observed a single candle burning : a watcher, no doubt.

The next place he saw was also on the other side the stream : Dolman's farmhouse, the prettiest residence in the valley. It was built of stone, and beautifully situated on a promontory between two streams. It had a lawn in front, which went down to the very edge of the water, and was much admired for its close turf and flowers. The farm buildings lay behind the house.

There was no light whatever in Dolman's : but they were early people. The house and lawn slept peacefully in the night : the windows were now shining, now dark, for small fleecy clouds kept drifting at short intervals across the crescent moon.

Ransome pushed on across the open ground, and for a mile or two saw few signs of life, except here and there a flickering light in some water-wheel ; for now one picturesque dam and wheel succeeded another as rapidly as Nature permitted ; and indeed the size of these dams, now shining in the fitful moonlight, seemed remarkable, compared with the mere thread of water which fed them, and connected them together for miles like pearls on a silver string.

Ransome pushed rapidly on, up hill and down dale, till he reached the high hill, at whose foot lay the hamlet of Damflask, distant two miles from Ousely Reservoir.

He looked down and saw a few lights in this hamlet, some stationary, but two moving.

"Hum!" thought Ransome ; "they don't seem to be quite so easy in their minds up here."

He dashed into the place and drew up at a house where several persons were collected.

As he came up, a singular group issued forth : a man, with a pig-whip, driving four children—the eldest not above seven years old—and carrying an infant in his arms. The little imps were clad in shoes, night-gowns, nightcaps, and a blanket apiece, and were shivering and whining at being turned out of bed into the night air.

Ransome asked the man what was the matter.

One of the bystanders laughed, and said, satirically, Ousely dam was to burst that night, so all the pigs and children were making for the hill.

The man himself, whose name was Joseph Galton, explained more fully.

"Sir," said he, "my wife is groaning, and I am bound to obey her. She had a dream last night she was in a flood, and had to cross a plank or summutter. I quieted her till supper; but then landlord came round and warned us all of a crack or summutter up at dam. And so now I am taking this little lot up to my brother's. It's the foolishest job I ever done: but needs must when the devil drives, and it is better so than to have my old gal sour her milk, and pine her suckling, and maybe fret herself to death into the bargain."

Ransome seized on the information, and rode on directly to the village inn. He called the landlord out, and asked him what he had been telling the villagers. Was there anything seriously amiss up at the reservoir?

"Nay, I hope not," said the man; "but we got a bit of a fright this afternoon: a young man rode through, going down to Hillsborough, and stopped here to have his girth mended; he had broke it coming down our hill. While he was taking a glass he let out his errand: they had found a crack in the embankment, and sent him down to Hillsborough to tell Mr. Tucker, the engineer. Bless your heart, we should never have known aught about it, if his girth hadn't broke." He added, as a reason for thinking it was not serious, that Mr. Tucker had himself inspected the dam just before tea-time, and hadn't even seen the crack. It was a labouring-man who had discovered it through crossing the embankment lower down than usual. "But you see, sir," said he, in conclusion, "we lie very low here, and right in the track; and so we mustn't make light of a warning. And, of course, many of the workmen stop here, and have their say; and, to tell you the truth, one or two of them have always disliked the foundation that embankment is built on: too many old landslips to be seen about. But, after all, I suppose they can empty the dam if need be; and, of course, they will, if there is any danger. I expect Mr. Tucker up every minute."

Ransome thanked him for his information and pushed on to Lower Hatfield: there he found lights in the houses and the inhabitants astir; but he passed through the village in silence and came to the great corn-mill, a massive stone structure with granite pillars, the pride of the place. The building was full of lights, and the cranes were all at work hoisting the sacks of flour from the lower floors to the top story. The faces of the men reflected in the flaring gas, and the black cranes with their gaunt arms, and the dark bodies rising by the snake-like cords, formed a curious picture in the fluctuating moonlight, and an interesting one too: for it showed the miller did not feel his flour quite safe.

The next place Ransome came to was Fox Farm.

Farmer Emden was standing at the door of his house, and, in reply to

Ransome, told him he had just come down from the reservoir. He had seen the crack and believed it to be a mere frost-crack. He apprehended no danger, and had sent his people to bed; however, he should sit up for an hour or two, just to hear what Tucker the engineer had to say about it; he had been sent for.

Ransome left him, and a smart canter brought him in sight of what seemed a long black hill, with great glow-worms dotted here and there.

That hill was the embankment, and the glow-worms were the lanterns of workmen examining the outer side of the embankment and prying into every part.

The enormous size and double slope of the bank, its apparent similarity in form and thickness to those natural barriers, with which nature hems in lakes of large dimensions, acted on Ransome's senses, and set him wondering at the timidity and credulity of the people in Hatfield and Damflask. This sentiment was uppermost in his mind when he rode up to the south side of the embankment.

He gave his horse to a boy and got upon the embankment and looked north.

The first glance at the water somewhat shook that impression of absolute security the outer side of the barrier had given him.

In nature a lake lies at the knees of the restraining hills, or else has a sufficient outlet.

But here was a lake nearly full to the brim on one side of the barrier and an open descent on the other.

He had encountered a little wind coming up, but not much; here, however, the place being entirely exposed, the wind was powerful and blew right down the valley, ruffling the artificial lake.

Altogether it was a solemn scene, and, even at first glance, one that could not be surveyed, after all those comments and reports, without some awe and anxiety. The surface of the lake shone like a mirror, and waves of some size dashed against the embankment with a louder roar than one would have thought possible, and tossed some spray clean over all; while, overhead, clouds, less fleecy now, and more dark and sullen, drifted so swiftly across the crescent moon that she seemed flying across the sky.

Having now realized that the embankment, huge as it was, was not so high by several hundred feet as nature builds in parallel cases, and that, besides the natural pressure of the whole water, the upper surface of the lake was being driven by the wind against the upper or thin part of the embankment, Ransome turned and went down the embankment to look at the crack and hear opinions.

There were several workmen, an intelligent farmer called Ives, and Mr. Mountain, one of the contractors who had built the dam, all examining the crack.

Mr. Mountain was remarking that the crack was perfectly dry, a plain proof there was no danger.

"Ay, but," said Ives, "it has got larger since tea-time; see, I can get my hand in now."

"Can you account for that?" asked Ransome of the contractor.

Mountain said it was caused by the embankment settling. "Everything settles down a little, houses and embankments and all. There's no danger, Mr. Ransome, believe me."

"Well, sir," said Ransome, "I am not a man of science, but I have got eyes and I see the water is very high, and driving against your weak part. Ah!" Then he remembered Little's advice. "Would you mind opening the sluice-pipes?"

"Not in the least, but I think it is the engineer's business to give an order of that kind."

"But he is not here, and professional etiquette must give way where property and lives, perhaps, are at stake. To tell you the truth, Mr. Mountain, I have got the advice of an abler man than Mr. Tucker. His word to me was, 'If the water is as high as they say, don't waste time, but open the sluices at once and relieve the dam.'"

The workmen, who had said scarcely a word till then, raised an assenting murmur at the voice of common sense.

Mountain admitted it could do no harm, and gave an order accordingly; screws were applied and the valves of the double set of sluice-pipes were forced open, but with infinite difficulty, owing to the tremendous pressure of the water.

This operation showed all concerned what a giant they were dealing with: while the sluices were being lifted, the noise and tremor of the pipes were beyond experience and conception. When, after vast efforts, they were at last got open, the ground trembled violently, and the water, as it rushed out of the pipes, roared like discharges of artillery. So hard is it to resist the mere effect of the senses, that nearly everybody ran back appalled, although the effect of all this roaring could only be to relieve the pressure: and, in fact, now that those sluices were opened the dam was safe, provided it could last a day or two.

Lights were seen approaching, and Mr. Tucker, the resident engineer, drove up: he had Mr. Carter, one of the contractors, in the gig with him.

He came on the embankment, and signified a cold approval of the sluices being opened.

Then Ransome sounded him about blowing up the waste-weir.

Tucker did not reply, but put some questions to a workman or two. Their answers showed that they considered the enlargement of the crack a fatal sign.

Upon this Mr. Tucker ordered them all to stand clear of the suspected part.

"Now, then," said he, "I built this embankment, and I'll tell you whether it is going to burst or not."

Then he took a lantern, and was going to inspect the crack himself;

but Mr. Carter, respecting his courage and coolness, would accompany him. They went to the crack, examined it carefully with their lanterns, and then crossed over to the waste-weir: no water was running into it in the ordinary way, which showed the dam was not full to its utmost capacity.

They returned, and consulted with Mountain.

Ransome put in his word, and, once more remembering Little's advice, begged them to blow up the waste-weir.

Tucker thought that was a stronger measure than the occasion required; there was no immediate danger: and the sluice-pipes would lower the water considerably in twenty-four hours.

Farmer Ives put in his word. "I can't learn from any of you that an enlarging crack in a new embankment is a common thing. I shall go home, but my boots won't come off this night."

Encouraged by this, Mr. Mountain, the contractor, spoke out.

"Mr. Tucker," said he, "don't deceive yourself; the sluice-pipes are too slow: if we don't relieve the dam, there'll be a blow up in half-an-hour; mark my words."

"Well," said Mr. Tucker, "no precaution has been neglected in building this dam; provision has been made even for blowing up the waste-weir: a hole has been built in the masonry, and there's dry powder and a fuse kept at the valve-house. I'll blow up the waste-weir, though I think it needless. I am convinced that crack is above the level of the water in the reservoir."

This observation struck Ransome, and he asked if it could not be ascertained by measurement.

"Of course it can," said Tucker: "and I'll measure it as I come back."

He then started for the weir and Carter accompanied him.

They crossed the embankment, and got to the weir.

Ives went home, and the workmen withdrew to the side, not knowing exactly what might be the effect of the explosion.

By and by, Ransome looked up, and observed a thin sheet of water beginning to stream over the centre of the embankment, and trickle down: the quantity was nothing; but it alarmed him. Having no special knowledge on these matters, he was driven to comparisons; and it flashed across him, that, when he was a boy, and used to make little mud-dams in April, they would resist the tiny stream until it trickled over them, and from that moment their fate was sealed. Nature, he had observed, operates alike in small things and great, and that sheet of water, though thin as a wafer, alarmed him.

He thought it was better to give a false warning than withhold a true one: he ran to his horse, jumped on him, and spurred away.

His horse was fast and powerful, and carried him in three minutes back to Emden's farm. The farmer had gone to bed. Ransome knocked him up, and told him he feared the dam was going; then galloped on to

Hatfield Mill. Here he found the miller and his family all gathered outside, ready for a start; one workman had run down from the reservoir.

"The embankment is not safe."

"So I hear. I'll take care of my flour, and my folk. The mill will take care of herself." And he pointed with pride to the solid structure and granite pillars.

Ransome galloped on, shouting as he went.

The shout was taken up a-head, and he heard a voice crying in the night, "It's COMING! It's COMING!" This weird cry, which, perhaps, his own galloping and shouting had excited, seemed like an independent warning, and thrilled him to the bone. He galloped through Hatfield, shouting "Save yourselves! Save yourselves!" and the people poured out, and ran for high ground, shrieking wildly; looking back he saw the hill dotted with what he took for sheep at first; but it was the folk in their night-clothes.

He galloped on to Damflask, still shouting as he went.

At the edge of the hamlet, he found a cottage with no light in it; he dismounted and thundered at the door. "Escape for your lives! for your lives!"

A man, called Hillsbro' Harry, opened the window.
"The embankment is going. Fly for your lives!"

"Nay," said the man, coolly, "Ousely dam will brust noane this week," and turned to go to bed again.

He found Joseph Galton and another man carrying Mrs. Galton and her new-born child away in a blanket. This poor woman, who had sent her five children away on the faith of a dream, was now objecting, in a faint voice, to be saved herself from evident danger. "Oh dear, dear! you might as well let me go down with the flood as kill me with taking me away."

Such was the sapient discourse of Mrs. Galton, who, half an hour ago, had been supernaturally wise and prudent. Go to, wise mother and silly woman, men will love thee none the less for the inequalities of thine intellect; and honest Joe will save thy life, and heed thy twaddle no more than the bleating of a lamb.

Ransome had not left the Galtons many yards behind him, when there was a sharp explosion heard up in the hills.

Ransome pulled up and said aloud, "It will be all right now, thank goodness! they have blown up the weir."

The words were scarcely out of his mouth when he heard a loud sullen roar, speedily followed by a tremendous hiss, and a rumbling thunder, that shook the very earth where he stood, two miles distant.

This is what had taken place since he left the reservoir but ten minutes ago.

Mr. Tucker and Mr. Carter laid the gunpowder and the train, and lighted the latter, and came back across the middle of the embankment.

Being quite safe here from the effect of the explosion, Mr. Tucker was

desirous to establish by measurement that the water in the reservoir had not risen so high as the crack in the embankment.

With this view he took out a measure, and, at some risk of being swept into eternity, began coolly to measure the crack downwards.

At this very time water was trickling over; and that alarmed Carter, and he told Tucker they were trifling with their own lives.

"Oh," said Tucker, "that is only the spray from the waves."

They actually measured the crack, stooping over it with their lanterns.

When they had done that, Carter raised his head, and suddenly clutched Tucker by the arm, and pointed upwards. The water was pouring over the top, still in a thin sheet, but then that sheet was gradually widening. The water came down to their feet, and some of it disappeared in the crack; and the crack itself looked a little larger than when last inspected. Tucker said, gravely, "I don't like that: but let me examine the valve-house at once." He got down to the valve-house, but before he could ascertain what quantity of water was escaping, Carter called to him, "Come out, for God's sake, or you are lost!"

He came running out, and saw an opening thirty feet wide and nearly a foot deep, and a powerful stream rushing over it.

The moment Tucker saw that, he cried, "It's all up, the embankment must go!" And, the feeling of the architect overpowering the instincts of the man, he stood aghast. But Carter laid hold of him, and dragged him away.

Then he came to himself, and they ran across the embankment.

As they started, the powder, which had hung fire unaccountably, went off, and blew up the waste-weir: but they scarcely heard it; for, as they ran, the rent above kept enlarging and deepening at a fearful rate, and the furious stream kept rushing past their flying heels, and threatened to sweep them sideways to destruction.

They were safe at last; but even as they stood panting, the rent in the top of the embankment spread — deepened — yawned terrifically — and the pent-up lake plunged through, and sweeping away at once the centre of the embankment, rushed, roaring and hissing, down the valley, an avalanche of water, whirling great trees up by the roots, and sweeping huge rocks away, and driving them, like corks, for miles.

At that appalling sound, that hissing thunder, the like of which he had never heard before, and hopes never to hear again, Ransome spurred away at all his speed, and warned the rest of the village with loud inarticulate cries; he could not wait to speak, nor was it necessary.

At the top of the hill he turned a moment, and looked up the valley: soon he saw a lofty white wall running down on Hatfield Mill: it struck the mill, and left nothing visible but the roof, surrounded by white foam.

Another moment, and he distinctly saw the mill swim a yard or two, then disappear, and leave no trace, and on came the white wall, hissing and thundering.

Ransome uttered a cry of horror, and galloped madly forward, to save what lives he might.

Whenever he passed a house he shrieked his warning, but he never drew rein.

As he galloped along his mind worked. He observed the valley widen in places, and he hoped the flying lake would spread, and so lose some of that tremendous volume and force before which he had seen Hatfield stone mill go down.

With this hope he galloped on, and reached Poma Bridge, five miles and a half from the reservoir.

Here, to his dismay, he heard the hissing thunder sound as near to him as it was when he halted on the hill above Damflask: but he could see nothing, owing to a turn in the valley.

At the bridge itself, he found a man standing, without his hat, staring wildly up the valley.

He yelled to this man, "Dam is burst. Warn the village—for their lives—run on to Hillsborough—when you are winded, send another on. You'll all be paid at the Town Hall."

Then he dashed across the bridge.

As he crossed it, he caught sight of the flying lake once more: he had gone over more ground, but he had gone no farther. He saw the white wall strike Dolman's farm; there was a light in one window now. He saw the farmhouse, with its one light, swim bodily, then melt and disappear, with all the poor souls in it.

He galloped on; his hat flew off: he came under the coiners' house, and yelled a warning. A window was opened, and a man looked out; the light was behind him, and, even in that terrible moment, he recognized—Shifty Dick.

"The flood! the flood! Fly! Get on high ground, for your lives!"

He galloped furiously, and made for Little's house.

CHAPTER XLIV.

LITTLE took a book, and tried to while away the time till Ransome's return; but he could not command his attention. The conversation about Grace had excited a topic which excluded every other.

He opened his window, a French casement, and looked out upon the night.

Then he observed that Grace, too, was keeping vigil; for a faint light shot from her window, and sparkled on the branches of the plane-tree in her little front garden.

"And that," thought Henry, sadly, "is all I can see of her. Close to her, yet far off,—farther than ever now."

A deep sadness fell on him, sadness and doubt. Suppose he were to

lay a trap for her to-morrow, and catch her at her own door! What good would it do? He put himself in her place. That process showed him at once she would come no more. He should destroy her little bit of patient, quiet happiness, the one daily sunbeam of her desolate life.

By-and-by, feeling rather drowsy, he lay down in his clothes to wait for Ransome's return. He put out his light.

From his bed he could see Grace's light kiss the plane-tree.

He lay, and fixed his eyes on it, and thought of all that had passed between them; and, by-and-by, love and grief made his eyes misty, and that pale light seemed to dance and flicker before him.

About midnight, he was nearly dozing off, when his ear caught a muttering outside; he listened, and thought he heard some instrument grating below.

He rose very softly, and crept to the window, and looked keenly through his casement.

He saw nothing at first; but presently a dark object emerged from behind the plane-tree I have mentioned, and began to go slowly, but surely, up it.

Little feared it was a burglar, about to attack that house which held his darling.

He stepped softly to his rifle, and loaded both barrels. It was a breech-loader. Then he crawled softly to the window, and peered out, rifle in hand.

The man had climbed the tree, and was looking earnestly in at one of the windows in Grace's house. His attention was so fixed that he never saw the gleaming eye which now watched him.

Presently the drifting clouds left the moon clear a minute, and Henry Little recognized the face of Frederick Coventry.

He looked at him, and began to tremble.

Why did he tremble? Because—after the first rush of surprise—rage, hate, and bloody thoughts crossed his mind. Here was his enemy, the barrier to his happiness, come, of his own accord, to court his death. Why not take him for a burglar, and shoot him dead? Such an act might be blamed, but it could not be punished severely.

The temptation was so great, that the rifle shook in his hands, and a cold perspiration poured down his back.

He prayed to God in agony to relieve him from this temptation; he felt that it was more than he could bear.

He looked up. Coventry was drawing up a short iron ladder from below. He then got hold of it, and fixed it on the sill of Grace's window.

Little burst his own window open. "You villain!" he cried, and levelled his rifle at him.

Coventry uttered a yell of dismay. Grace opened her window, and looked out, with a face full of terror.

At sight of her, Coventry cried to her in abject terror, "Mercy! mercy! Don't let him shoot me."

Grace looked round, and saw Henry aiming at Coventry.

She screamed, and Little lowered the rifle directly.

Coventry crouched directly in the fork of the tree.

Grace looked bewildered from one to the other; but it was to Henry she spoke, and asked him in trembling tones what it "all meant."

But, ere either could make a reply, a dire sound was heard of hissing thunder: so appalling that the three actors in this strange scene were all frozen and rooted where they stood.

Then came a fierce galloping, and Ransome, with his black hair and beard flying, and his face like a ghost, reined up, and shouted wildly, "Dam burst! Coming down here! Fly for your lives! Fly!"

He turned, and galloped up the hill.

Cole and his mate emerged, and followed him, howling; but before the other poor creatures, half paralyzed, could do anything, the hissing thunder was upon them. What seemed a mountain of snow came rolling, and burst on them with terrific violence, whirling great trees and fragments of houses past with incredible velocity.

At the first blow, the house that stood nearest to the flying lake was shattered; and went to pieces soon after: all the houses quivered as the water rushed round them two stories high.

Little never expected to live another minute; yet, in that awful moment, his love stood firm. He screamed to Grace, "The houses must go!—the tree!—the tree!—get to the tree!"

But Grace, so weak at times, was more than mortal strong at that dread hour.

"What, live with him," she cried, "when I can die with you!"

She folded her arms, and her pale face was radiant—no hope, no fear.

Now came a higher wave, and the water reached above the window-sills of the bedroom floor, and swept away the ladder; yet, driven forward like a cannon-bullet, did not yet pour into the bedrooms from the main stream: but by degrees the furious flood broke, melted, and swept away the intervening houses, and then hacked off the gable-end of Grace's house, as if Leviathan had bitten a piece out. Through that aperture the flood came straight in, levelled the partitions at a blow, rushed into the upper rooms with fearful roar, and then, rushing out again to rejoin the greater body of water, blew the front wall clean away, and swept Grace out into the raging current.

The water pouring out of the house carried her, at first, towards the tree, and Little cried wildly to Coventry to save her. He awoke from his stupor of horror, and made an attempt to clutch her; but then the main force of the mighty water drove her away from him towards the house; her helpless body was whirled round and round three times by the struggling eddies, then hurried away like a feather by the overwhelming torrent.

The Lions of Catalonia—Monserrat.

I PARTED with the faithful reader last autumn,* in the wild little ravine dotted with a few olive and carob trees, which is spanned by that Roman aqueduct so dear to all lovers of old Tarragona. Let me rejoin him on the road back to the city, and which connects it with Lerida, the railway communication between them being still imperfect. As we roll along, with some dignity, in what I fear is the only carriage (the *tartana* does not suit my constitution) to be hired in the city of the Scipios, we naturally observe the character of the traffic. We meet waggons drawn by strings of over-worked horses (your Spaniard always overloads his beast, and invariably, by the way, gallops up hill), waggons with ponderous casks of wine—in Catalan *vi*, which the people pronounce *bi*. The sight reminds me that some of these days our province will be better known than it is as a producer of wine. In the district of which Tarragona is the commercial centre, there is an excellent red wine called *priorato*, which, I fancy, never reaches England except doctored and disguised into “*port*.” Now, *port* is a very good thing, and *priorato* is a very good thing; but if the latter could be sold cheap, in a more natural form in England, its own merits would save it from the necessity of borrowing a Portuguese name. It would probably never rank with *port*, although the wines of Catalonia have not yet had the degree of skill brought to bear on them which enables one to decide of what they are capable. But suppose it never did, what then? It would still be an honest drinkable wine, doing its duty in that station to which it had been called. So, too, with other species. There is a white wine grown to the eastward of Barcelona, called *alella*, of which not one man in a thousand has ever heard, but which, when at its best, has a character entitling it to compete with sherry. Why do we adhere to a few historic liquors with a tenacity that makes us suffer misery when we find ourselves in regions where they do not happen to be in use? The Catalans, for instance, do not drink sherry, and it is as dear in Barcelona as in London. An Englishman has to educate himself afresh, before he can relish wines which Martial sent to his friends, with an epigram for the label of the jar. But,

Quo me, Bacche, rapis tui
Plenum?

EPOur destination is Tarragona, on our way to Monserrat, and if we went into the whole wine question of Cataluña, we should require the whole paper for our purpose. Arrived at Tarragona, however, I need not hurry my tourist away. I have endeavoured, indeed, to give him a

* *Cornhill Magazine*, No. 117, September, 1869.

sketch of its classical character; and he will be glad to hear that its museum is recovering from the dismal catastrophe recorded in my last essay. Whether the chief of that institution has yet recovered (in another sense) the modest *sueldo*, or salary, of which the revolution deprived him, I cannot say. But the museum is almost itself again. And venturing now to touch, before leaving, some more modern points of Tarragonese interest, let me add that there is a room there devoted to mediæval ruins. We Protestants have had many a hard saying flung at us for our destruction of what was beautiful in Catholic antiquity. But, here in Spain, the most intensely Romanist part of Europe, we are able to show our visitors traces of a devastation as savage as ever fell upon Perth or St. Andrew's. And it took place, here, long after we had begun in the North of Europe to cherish tenderly the ruins of the old days. So, in the museum of Tarragona, there exist, in many forms of disfigurement, large pieces of the monuments of the Kings of Arragon, and other potentates, saved from the wreck made of the Monastery of Poblet by Spanish revolutionists in 1835. Here you may see the sword of, perhaps, the greatest and most interesting of those kings,—James I., the Conqueror, the great “Jacme,” the “Conquistador,”—who, in the thirteenth century, governed Catalonia and Arragon with admirable vigour; and added to them the Balearic Islands and Valencia. When Poblet was sacked and burnt in the year above mentioned, the bones of King Jacme, or *Jaume*, as he is called in Catalan, were saved and brought to Tarragona, where they lie in the handsome marble sarcophagus which is one of the first things that seizes your attention as you enter the Cathedral. In our last ramble through the ancient city, we were, perhaps, a little too exclusively employed upon its classical memories,—an excusable pre-occupation, since no other town in Spain has such a chain of them—though in the magnitude of the Roman remains existing, Tarragona, I admit, may be surpassed. Let me then counsel the stranger to examine attentively, *con detención*, certain details of the Cathedral which I could not touch upon in sketching its general character,—especially the exquisite marble and ivory carving of the *retablo* near the altar, and the exquisite wood carving of the stalls in the choir. Public spirit is not the strong point of the Spanish character. But the Cathedral of Tarragona has been fortunate in its archbishops, who have done much for its decoration. A chapel near the entry to the cloisters preserves the memory of one of the most distinguished of them, Archbishop Augustin, an early student of inscriptions and coins. Unfortunately, the scholarly spirit,—the truest antidote to fanaticism—did not continue to live among the Spanish clergy, who cherished the fanatical spirit instead;—“possessed” by which, they now, like the possessed in the Gospel, haunt mournfully the tombs of dead beliefs.

Not far from the Cathedral are to be found some very complete examples of Byzantine ecclesiastical architecture. All schools, faiths, and styles, indeed, have taken their turn, and left their trace, in this

delightful "old curiosity shop" (with reverence be it spoken) of the Mediterranean. And as the ancient part of it seems to have lived till now, so the modern part of it has an antique look. What a queer old street, for instance, is that *Calle de los Caballeros*,—"Gentlemen Street," as we might say in England,—so called, because it was the favourite residence of the nobles of the province! The vaulted hall of the house you pass stands open; and if you cross the threshold, and take a modest peep up the staircase, you will probably see a fragment of old Roman bas-relief let into the wall. There is little fear of your disturbing anybody, since, for all practical and social purposes now-a-days, the nobility of Catalonia, like that of other provinces of Spain, seems to be extinct. They never lived on their lands in the English fashion, but in towns like our Tarragona, and Vich, and others; and they still possess considerable estates, without exercising, as far as I am able to see, any practical influence over the country. The Liberals suppressed the *Seminarios Nobiles*, at which they used to be educated some thirty or forty years ago, and where they occasionally got a tincture of polite letters from the Jesuits. What sort of education they have had since, I am unable to learn, but conjecture that it must be about as good as none at all, for I hear of them, only, as damaging their estates by gambling; idling when they are not doing worse; and flying to Paris as soon as their unfortunate country is threatened with any political convulsion.

The every-day Tarragona of the actual hour,—the living Tarragona, I mean,—is pretty well the same sort of thing as any other third or fourth-rate Spanish town. There is the usual dirty cafe, with its constant smoking and spitting, where everybody in the place is to be found at one hour or another; and where the Spanish young man, if he is not taking his coffee, chocolate, or glass of hot milk, can call for his "*sarsa*," or tumbler of sarsaparilla ("A go of sarsaparilla" sounds a strange order to a London man!) There is the usual theatre of respectable size, with its faded actresses playing French burlesque, and an audience that nothing rouses to animation, except the *can-can*. The popularity of that miserable jingle, with its accompanying obscene dance, is wonderful. Upon the whole, it beats that of the revolutionary "*Hymn of Riego*." There is also a summer-garden, with another theatre in it, for the same kind of dramatic amusement,—the social life, in fact, alternating between intense dulness and a low kind of excitement. There is no reading, no dinner-giving, no sort of public sports, no trace of any kind of cultivated amusement; you cannot even buy photographs of the buildings which you have enjoyed so much. On asking for these, I was told that "an Englishman" passing through Tarragona had taken some, and that copies would be sent out for sale. I found, afterwards, that the same gentleman had been in Barcelona, and had been refused admittance into the only house from which a very picturesque old bit of the "*Audiencia*" could be conveniently taken. All the quasi-intellectual stir of the revolution in Spain is on the surface, and is a ripple caused by winds

blowing across the Pyrenees. The national life below is profoundly ignorant and incurious; nay, worse than that, is apt, when roused, to break out as savagery. Last September gave us terrible proof of this in Tarragona itself. A Republican general was entering the town amidst the welcomes of his admirers, when the unfortunate secretary of the civil governor advanced to his carriage to remonstrate with him. In an instant the secretary was stabbed and knocked down. He was then dragged by the heels as the bull is dragged out of the bull-ring. He lay for more than an hour in a wine-shop, at the mercy of every dastardly brute in the rabble, till he was again dragged down one of the steep streets leading to the harbour, and breathed his last on the margin of the sea. This crime was the immediate cause—as far as Catalonia was concerned—of the Republican rising, of which my reader must have heard so much last autumn. For the disarmament of Volunteers of Liberty which followed provoked the Republicans into trying resistance by force, in which they failed signally, after having, at one place in the part of Catalonia with which we are now occupied,—I mean Valls,—murdered, plundered, and outraged, after a fashion now happily exploded in other parts of Europe.

When that charming writer, Henri Beyle ("De Stendhal"), was consul at Civita Vecchia, he explained, in part, the horrible ennui from which he suffered, by saying that there was no life to interest one except that of the convicts—and that it was impossible to make a society out of them. The traveller curious about modern Tarragona will find there a Spanish prison of the true Spanish type; and Spanish prisons, hospitals, and asylums stand alone by themselves in the nineteenth century. As he strolls in the morning on the rampart walk at the northern end of the Rambla,—behind him, the black mass of the Castle of Pilate, the Palace of Augustus; before and below him, the sweep of hilly coast and the spirit-soothing ever classical sea,—his eye will be caught by a curious group of buildings far beneath. Their site is that of the ancient amphitheatre, which could be seen from the praetor's windows, and which is now traversed by the single line of rail of the Barcelona railway. A court-yard with white walls lies open to his view, in which he can discern gray figures moving like rats. Studying the surroundings, while still ignorant of the character of this dwelling, he will observe stone sentry-stations planted about, each occupied by a soldier with a musket. The whole story suddenly tells itself,—it is a prison, that he is looking at. And this is the fact. The Palace itself is a house of detention, as we should say; but the building below is a regular prison for convicts of the worst class and heaviest sentences, natives not of Catalonia only, but of different other regions. During one of my visits to Tarragona, my companion, an accomplished English clergyman, well acquainted with the prison system of England, desired to have a look at this Spanish gaol, and we proceeded to apply to the authorities accordingly. We brought an official letter in due course to the governor of the institution, and his reception of us

dwells in my memory as a pleasant quaint specimen of the old Castilian courtesy. The Catalan is a formal man, too ; but the Catalan is *bourgeois* compared with the stately Castilian, or the genial Andaluz. The moment our governor of the prison appeared I knew that he was not a *hijo de Cataluña*, a son of Catalonia, but from some still sunnier part of Spain.

We had evidently broken in, though it was well on in the afternoon, upon an hour of retirement (life goes wonderfully easily along with Spanish officials), for the governor came out to see us in a Greek cap and slippers. He was a little man with very dark eyes, and his salutation was of oriental politeness. He bowed us into his office, bowed again, and handed us cigarettes. Returning his courtesy, I asked, in my best Castilian (for he spoke no French), whether he had read the letter which we had had the honour to bring to him ? "No," said he, "when distinguished and known persons like your worships are good enough to visit my prison, no introduction is necessary!" This was becoming baronial; so the Rev. Mr. B——, vicar of S——, and myself, felt that we should see everything to the best advantage. And certainly everything was laid open before us with the utmost frankness. We began with the sick-rooms and kitchen. The beds were fairly clean ; the stuff being cooked seemed to consist principally of beans and grease. Then we had a walk to the prison proper : the sentries saluted, the gates opened, and we found ourselves in the yard which I had so often contemplated from the heights above. At once we were in a prison world the very antithesis of the prison world of Pentonville or Millbank. All was "free and easy" and barbarous—a sort of homely criminal existence, less like a "Model Prison" than like the Whitecross Street of thirty years ago, *plus* iron chains. Every convict had an iron chain down one leg, no doubt ; but he was walking freely backwards and forwards with his chum ; he was smoking ; nobody was attempting to civilize or improve him ; and he did not look unhappy. There were some very choice ruffians in the crowd ; for the sun ripens ruffians like other things—swarthy fellows, with black eyes glancing like the daggers they so well know how to use. They were from different regions, the governor said—Cataluña, the Castiles, Valencia, La Mancha. "Perhaps some of them descended from the galley-slaves that Don Quixote liberated?" said I. "Si!" the governor answered, laughing, and his face lighted up. A Spaniard is always pleased when a foreigner mentions Don Quixote. The Indies are gone from his country ; the gold is gone ; the European position is gone : but the Don is still here ; and even when a Spaniard does not read him, he knows well what his fame is.

My friend ventured to ask whether it was not dangerous to allow such free communication between the convicts ? Might they not form plots together ?

Our governor turned round sharply, and lowering his voice with a face full of meaning, said, "None of them could plot anything which I should not hear within an hour ! "

But by way of lightening any gloomy impressions we might be feeling, and perhaps of showing the *Ingleses* that his gaol was not without its civilizing elements, the governor startled us at this point by calling for "music." We had gone inside one of the buildings,—part of a former convent,—and were in the gallery, when a rattling of chains up the centre of the hall announced the coming of the "band." They had a set of wind-instruments, and they went at their work with a will. "Play *Riego*," called out the governor—himself a child of the last revolution, and an old sufferer in the cause of Liberalism. Forthwith, the *Hymn of Liberty* began,—each player's chains giving a faint accompaniment if he happened, in his enthusiasm, to shake his leg. The whole scene was one of the wildest humour. I buried my face between my hands, and laughed till I cried.

We inspected the washing arrangements, which were terribly imperfect ; and the sleeping-galleries, which were far too narrow and close. The mere thought of what those galleries must be about two o'clock on a Mediterranean summer morning was enough to make soul and body sick. We also saw the neat little chapel ; and the black-holes, or *calabozos*, for the refractory,—very dismal dens. Before we left, some of the convicts were allowed to offer us for sale cigar-cases, knitted stockings, and other little articles of the kind. The governor was friendly and attentive to the moment of parting, and perfectly communicative ; and we left grateful to him for his cordial politeness.

I have added these sketches of modern Tarragona to what I said before, of the antiquarian aspect of the city, in hopes that the reader will thus have one of our principal Lions of Catalonia before him with a certain completeness. Unlike Barcelona, Tarragona is not a manufacturing place. It is only important now as the seat of the export trade in wine and fruit, with some oil from the district of Urgel. A better harbour would be a great boon to Tarragona, which, according to Strabo, was *ἀλιμενος* (harbourless) even in its great days. The completion of the railway communication with Lerida would also be a great advantage to Tarragona ; while, like every other town in the province, she feels the inconvenience of that unfortunate gap to the eastward of Gerona, which still, in 1870, leaves unconnected Spain and France.

But the central point of interest in this portion of my series is to be the famous monastic mountain,—the Athos, or Carmel of Catalonia,—MONSERRAT,—a shrine of Our Lady for a thousand years. To reach it comfortably, we return by rail to Barcelona. Five minutes after we leave Tarraco we pass, on our left, the brown old Roman tomb already described ; and by keeping a sharp look-out just beyond Altafulla, may get a glimpse of the noble Roman arch erected to the memory of Sergius Sura, the friend of Trajan and the younger Pliny. At Vendrell, a different kind of interest awaits us. "The women here," said the little guard of the train to us, last time I came this way, "are the handsomest in Cataluña ; *tipos graciosos, si señor !*" added the small but gallant official, waving his pipe. He referred, doubtless, to an interesting class of face with Moorish-

looking eyes, which is found along the lines of defences,—such as the watersheds of rivers,—from which the Moors were gradually driven in the old days. The Catalan women, however, are not thought beautiful in Spain, where the Valencians and Andalusians bear away the palm; though they have often nice eyes, according to my humble judgment, and look picturesquely enough with those kerchiefs on their heads, which bear a certain resemblance to the *mitras* of the ancients. (The Sappho at p. 83 of King and Munro's charming *Horace* gives a fair notion of the effect of the Catalan kerchiefs.) Passing these sirens with the constancy of Ulysses and his crew, we have, for a long time, Monserrat in sight on our left. Seen from a distance, it forms a zigzag line,—like that made by forked lightning,—across the sky; and whether seen from land or sea, the first impression it makes gives the key to its character: the impression, I mean, of isolation. It seems to have nothing in common with the ridges of brown hills, the broken red-coloured valleys, of its part of the province; but asserts, as it were, a distinct individualism in keeping with its peculiar history.

In the days of Mr. Ford, author of the famous *Handboek of Spain*, it was usual to ascend Monserrat from Colbato, on the southern side, which can be reached now by the line on which we have been travelling. But since those days, the Saragossa Railway Company have made a carriage-road along the ribs of the mountain on the side opposite to that just mentioned, and both time and trouble are saved by adopting the Saragossa Railway route. Unluckily there are only two passenger-trains a day, and the first of these starts at half-past six in the morning. The mists are still clinging about the vine-stumps as we roll ourselves clear of the north-eastern suburbs of Barcelona, and glide into a hilly country. We pass Sabadell, a manufacturing town of some consequence,—remarkable for having kept out the Republican rioters and declined to allow itself to be robbed, last September. We pass Terrassa, the *Egara* of the Romans, where one or two inscriptions have been found. We have a three-hours' journey in all till the mountain, with its broken line of bare grey peaks, rises grandly on our left, and we stop at the station of "Monistrol." A diligence is in waiting to take us, first to Monistrol itself, and then slowly, by a winding road,—on which the diligence makes tacks like a ship beating to windward,—away up the side of the holy mountain, to the monastery which nestles in a corner of it, some three-fourths of the way up.

Monistrol—*Monasteriolum* of old—lies in a valley at the foot of Monserrat, upon the River Llobregat, the *Rubricatum* of Pliny. The descent to it from the station, with the village and river below, and the mountain towering above, close to, is inspiriting and exhilarating, after the dull slow Spanish train. The driver shouts, the bells jingle, the old rattle-trap of a vehicle goes merrily along, past olive-trees, and huge reed-plants, and cuttings through red sandstone alternating with layers of limestone. As we approach the village and bridge, we may remark a factory worked by water dammed off the Llobregat. Water-power is

considerably used, in this way, by the factories of Catalonia, and when a dry summer comes, such factories get into hard straits. Rattling across the bridge, the diligence stops at the inn, or *fonda*, where you are expected to breakfast before the ascent is commenced. A wise man will always eat when there is a chance in Spain, for he does not know what he will find at his next quarters. Besides, by this time you have been four hours out of your house; and the sun has come up from the Mediterranean, and is filling the valley with a light that, even in the depths of winter, feeds roses. The chances are that you are as hungry as—what shall I say?—well, as a British seaman in Barcelona Hospital, with his sop of bread-and-water at half-past six; his four ounces of bread, one and a half ounces of meat, and half a glass of wine at ten; and the same meal repeated at five!

A country inn in Catalonia is a tolerably large, rambling, dirty place, with queer rough frescoes on the walls of the sitting-room. If you can keep clear of garlic you may fare tolerably; and fowl with rice (*pollo con arroz*), seasoned with a dash of saffron, ought to be secured, if possible. The wine will be better than the *vin ordinaire* of the cities, inasmuch as it is not nearly so likely to be polluted with alcohol. At Monistrol you will have no reason to complain, but will mount your diligence light of heart. Now begins the zigzag road along the mountain side; and a well-made, creditable road it is. First, we rise over the housetops of Monistrol,—over houses of many stories, with arcades at one side, and tiles of various colours. The vegetation of Monserrat soon begins to delight by its copiousness. As early as February the almond-blossoms will be out, and the spring air is cheered by the bloom of many a fruit-tree. There is plenty of laurustinus and blue hepatica, of narcissus, geraniums, and scores of other plants. The mulberry and the tobacco-plant, the myrtle and the pine, thrive equally well, and suggest impartially their discordant associations, on these favoured slopes. The floral opulence of Monserrat is one of its most extraordinary characteristics, and is explained by the monks in their own way, after a fashion more sentimental than scientific. “Who can wonder at it,” they ask, “considering that Mary is the gardener?”—

Que aqui, como es Maria la Hortelana,
Medran las plantas sin industria humana.

Meanwhile, other picturesque delights, as we mount, are enormous blocks of stone—huge balls of conglomerate—which seem to hang over the ridges beneath which we pass along our winding way. And gradually the landscape below unrolls itself—an undulating orange-tawny-coloured country, spotted with olive-trees, which, in the distance, look no bigger than shrubs; a country with a white village here and there, but generally of empty and silent appearance, intersected by the old Rubricatum, which twists itself ingeniously through the land, and has affected the face of the landscape. At last we reach (so to speak) the highest layer of road, and find ourselves under the stone peaks that we have seen from far-away. Their shape is not unlike that of stalactites; they are, indeed, a kind of

immense stalactites standing upright,—pointed pillars of conglomerate, formed ages ago by the sea, before the Mediterranean had fallen within its present limits, or the Pyrenees had assumed their present shape.

When the diligence reaches the last portion of the upper line of road we wind up with a smart gallop, turn a corner, and run into the broad plateau on which stands the pile of buildings, comprising the monastery, the chapel, and the various places of lodging for pilgrims of the Old World, and tourists of the New. This transition from the epoch of pilgrims to the epoch of tourists is going on all over the world, and in Monserrat we see the process with a curious distinctness. Thus, we find, on passing the chief gate, a group of wretched little houses for poor pilgrims,—wretched as Spanish provisions for the poor usually are. But not far off stands a respectable restaurant where French wines and English beer may be had, and where the dinners are nearly as good as those of the Barcelona hotels. So, too, new *aposentos*, or quarters for lodging, have been built, where there are clean rooms and decent beds. The theory is that no charge is made, but you may give what you like, and of course, you give rather more than you would at an equally comfortable country inn. There is still a small staff of monks, about a dozen, who perform services in the chapel, and the old place is still crowded by Catalan worshippers on particular days of the year. But Nature is recovering her rights over the mountain, once given up wholly to Tradition. Its interest was once theological; it is now geological. And the abbots and hermits fade from the traveller's memory while he strolls among the buildings, and looks up at the overhanging rounded pinnacles of stone formed and shaped in primæval seas. The geologists, I may here state,—repeating their *dicta* without presuming to criticise them,—describe Monserrat as “a mountain of denudation,” and date it from the beginning of the secondary period. It is arranged in alternate strata of new red sandstone and pebbles of ancient rocks.

The monastery and other buildings stand, I have said, on a plateau on the eastern side of the mountain, with the white stone pinnacles above them, and a vast group of hills and rocks around. By passing through the oldest part of them you reach a curious garden facing the north, the wall of which was once decorated with a complete set (if the phrase be admitted) of the Apostles,—now unfortunately reduced to two or three grotesque figures of a sombre brown. From this antique garden the eye wanders over a vast view, and rests on the snowy line, dim in the distance, of the Pyrenees. Away, along the winding Llobregat, is the ancient city of Manresa (*Minorissa*), where Ignatius Loyola prepared himself for dedicating his sword to the Virgin of our Monserrat, by a long season of penitence and prayer. The general landscape, with its characteristic orange-tawny colour, and spots of olive-trees, has been sketched already. But our garden likewise overlooks or faces some of the most interesting sites of the mountain, such as the chapel that marks the place where the Image of the Virgin,—the magnet that drew the middle ages to Monserrat,

—was found ; and the hill where once stood a Temple of Venus, and from which the devil who presided over it leaped down into the valley when his evil day had gone by ! We are in the midst of a circle of queer legends which contrast oddly, in their gloom and barbarism, whether with the majesty of the surrounding scenery, or the bright, graceful, classical associations of the neighbouring Mediterranean. Nevertheless, we must dwell upon them a little, if we would understand the peculiar genius of the lonely and romantic place.

Monserrat, *Mons Serratus*, though it bears a Latin name, is not mentioned by any ancient writer. The eyes of the Scipios and of many a Roman must have rested upon it ; but no mention of its strange structure found its way into the scanty notices which we have of this part of Hispania Tarraconensis. Yet that striking kind of structure was undoubtedly what first attracted to it the attention of Christianized Laletania. The legend was that the mountain was rent asunder, and *serrated* in its present fashion, by a sympathetic pang with the convulsions of Calvary at the moment of the Crucifixion. My reader will smile or sigh, as his disposition inclines him, at this theory. But if he thinks that it is obsolete in Spain, even at this moment of my writing, he little knows that curious country. There lies beside me, on my desk, a work upon Monserrat, by the present Abbot Muntadas (I believe he is still alive), a work published at Manresa in 1867, where the truth of the legend in question is seriously maintained.* Nay, the abbot declares that “nobody can doubt it without denying the faith, and without preferring the satanical pride (*el satanico orgullo*) of the intellect to the authority of holy books. . . . Shall we not admit, as Christians,” continues Abbot Muntadas, “the earthquake that overthrew enormous rocks and mountains, while Jesus, the Son of God and the Son of Mary, was expiating our sins on Golgotha ? Has it been proved to us that these phenomena belonged exclusively to Jerusalem or Judea? . . . Are there not respectable traditions which point out other mountains of different parts of the world, which gave signs of grief like those of Jerusalem at the same moment and for the same cause ? And do not these traditions honour, as one of so many, our Monserrat ?” It is to be noted also, as part of the same tradition, that Monserrat is believed to have been barren before the time of the miracle in question, and that its profusion of fragrant shrub and flower is considered one result of that event.

We get upon surer ground when we are asked to believe that in the sixth century the mountain was frequented by many hermits, and that in the eighth castles were built upon it by the nobles, chiefly Franks, who were engaged in freeing this part of Spain from the Moors. The image of the Virgin is said to have been hidden, during that struggle, in a cave on Monserrat, by the governor and bishop of Barcelona, the exact date assigned being A.D. 718. It had been brought, in A.D. 50, to Barcelona,

* *Monserrat, su Pasado, su Presente, y su Porvenir, &c. &c.* Su autor el M. Ille. Sr. D. MIGUEL MUNTADAS, Abad, &c. Manresa, 1867.

by St. Peter,* who, unfortunately, was never in Spain, but who had been requested by the Virgin during her lifetime to make it, that she might show her love to the Catalans—of whom she had never heard. Till A.D. 880 it lay in the cave unknown, but was then miraculously revealed, and its worship was formally installed before the close of the ninth century, as the result of a singular example of Our Lady's mercy. There was a hermit of notable piety on the mountains, named Joan Gari, who unluckily fell into a snare laid for him by the devil with his usual ingenuity. Wilfred the Hairy was then Count of Barcelona, and had a daughter, Riquilda, possessed by a demon, who made it known that only Joan Gari, of Monserrat, could drive him out. Riquilda was sent to the mountain, and left alone with the holy man. But instead of expelling Riquilda's devil, he was tempted by one of his own. He first violated and then slew the Count's daughter—a crime, says our abbot, which made the mountain tremble to its foundation. But the crime was repented as soon as committed. He flung himself—it was A.D. 888—at the feet of the Sacred Image, and then made for Rome, to confess his sins and seek plenary indulgence from the Holy Father. The Pontiff granted pardon, but the penance which he imposed was severe. Gari was to go on all fours like a beast, and to expiate his crimes in this fashion all the way from Rome to Monserrat, and, afterwards, among the rocks and hills of Monserrat itself. He had passed six years in this condition of rational brutality, when another trial was made of him. In the year 894 the Count of Barcelona came to Monserrat, not to seek for his lost Riquildis, or Riquilda, but simply with a hunting-party. In the course of the chase they came upon some four-footed game of unusual size and appearance. The animal was, in fact, Gari, who knew the Count, though the Count took him only for a novel kind of beast. Placed in the Count's stable, Gari accepted this fresh penance with cheerfulness, and was soon rewarded by the Divine mercy. On the occasion of a grand banquet, the Count sent for his "monster" to amuse the company, when suddenly the heir of the house, a child, astonished them all by calling out,—in good Catalan, of course,—"*Llevat, Joan Gari, Deu t'ha perdonat tos pecats!*" "*Rise, Joan Gari, God has forgiven thy sins!*" In a moment the charm broke. Gari rose, then flung himself at the Count's feet, and with tears in his eyes confessed his crime, and recounted his subsequent history. The Count forgave him, and was conducted by him to the sepulchre of his murdered daughter, when—mercy upon mercy!—Requildis rose "*from her sweet sleep in the arms of Mary,*" † and, with a smile on her lips, embraced her father. Riquildis resolved to dedicate her life to the Virgin and the mountain. A convent was founded by the Count for her and her sisters in religion, and of this she was the first abbess.

In the next century the nuns of Monserrat were transferred to Barcelona, and were succeeded by monks, whose first prior, Raymond, was appointed in A.D. 888. The monastery prospered. Donations flowed

* MUNTADAS, p. 106-7.

† *Ibid.* p. 119.

in. Don Juan of Arragon was prior in A.D. 1320. The priory was made an abbey in 1410 by Benedict XIII., who had visited the holy spot, accompanied with twelve cardinals. The Sacred Image worked many miracles, and its shrine became crowded with lamps of silver. Warriors of princely houses retired to the hermitages of the mountain to repose in sanctity and die in peace. And so the generations rolled on, and the odour of sanctity about the place grew more and more dense. Its pilgrims were spiritual kings, and kings were found among the pilgrims. Charles V. came to Monserrat in 1538; Maximilian of Bohemia in 1550; and Philip III. in 1590, when the Sacred Image was moved from the old church to the new one, each spot where it had rested being marked by some memorial.

The image all this time continued to effect miracles of various kinds, and the monastery continued to flourish till the beginning of the present century. Charles IV. visited it in 1801. But evil days were at hand, and the miracles ceased just when they were most wanted. When the French invaded Spain in 1808, the Catalans, unluckily, resolved to fortify the mountain, but were unable to defend it after they had made the fortifications. The French took it in 1809, without inflicting serious damage; but in 1811 they took it again, carrying fire and sword everywhere; and in 1812 they destroyed all that the previous year had spared. The Catalans have little to boast of as regards the war of that time. Lord Collingwood was off the coast, and breathed his last there in March, 1810. "I have had nothing but distresses and disappointments," writes the noble old admiral, in March, 1809,—"disappointments in the languor and want of energy that appear among the Spaniards. Unless a great revolution take place in that country, which I do not expect, it is lost, and the liberal aid which we have given them will not save them from falling under the domination of France."* He did not live to see how true his words were; but the French remained masters of every important part of Catalonia till they were forced to yield it as a consequence of the victories of the Duke of Wellington elsewhere. Yet now we are told by Spanish orators, that the chief work of the Duke was following up and destroying armies which had been beaten before: †—

For, benefits, though undeserved and great,
No gratitude in felon minds beget,
As tribute to his wit the churl receives the treat.‡

Certainly, the French behaved cruelly at Monserrat; almost as cruelly as the Spaniards during their civil wars behaved to each other. They hunted the hermits from their retreats among the rocks, and shot them like wild animals. The tourist will find abundant exercise in reaching the highest of these hermitages by winding stone paths along the edges of the ravines,—over gorges clad with many a wild tree and pleasant shrub. From the loftiest summits, on a clear day, the Balearic Islands may be seen, and many a league of land known to Hannibal and

* *Correspondence*, l. 335.

† Sr. CASTELLAR said this not many weeks ago in the Cortes.

‡ DRYDEN.

to Caesar. The hermitages are by old conventionalism called "caves;" but the truth rather is that they were a kind of comfortable cottages; and sanctity in a cottage, like love in the same, may not have been an unpleasant affair. It was a blank life, intellectually, no doubt. But I cannot help thinking that even when the sanctity was real, it was a good deal helped by sheer honest stupidity,—a sheer want of the energy necessary either to conquer the world or to enjoy it. Then, there was the little vanity, too, of being one of "our saints;" and as for social and personal privations, the Spaniard—saintly or not—was never given to eating well, and never suffered severely from the want of a tub. Yet there must have been poetic recluses also—men sick of court and camp—who in the delicious air of those rugged heights found a home such as the eyrie is to the weary eagle.

The charm of Monserrat—at all events to the northern man who has a love of nature and a sentiment regarding it, of which Spaniards are destitute—lies in the rambles to which it tempts him, and which refresh his soul after the humdrum contact of Catalan traders; in the sight of the sun coming up the valley from the Mediterranean, and awakening the whole landscape into joy and song. But he will not neglect the monuments of the old days, battered and neglected though they be. Monserrat has never recovered from the effects of the war. There are beautiful fragments of Gothic architecture there, but they are patched with modern wall; and the ancient tombs have lost the character of resting-places, and become mutilated curiosities. Empty windows stare at you from which many a monkish head, that Murillo might have painted, once looked out. The chapel itself, where the handful of monks still remaining perform service, is large and elegant, but it has been "restored," and the effect of modern restorations in Spain is somehow always tawdry. In passing to it, your attention is arrested by a tablet, a Latin inscription on which announces that the blessed Ignatius à Loyola, here, with much prayer and weeping (*multa prece fletuque*), devoted himself to God and the Virgin, and watched through the night. From hence, the inscription concludes, he set forth to found the society of Jesus in the year 1522. Loyola, a Biscayan by birth, and wounded at Pamplona, the capital of Navarre, has a close connection with Catalonia in his spiritual history. Here, at Monserrat, after giving his clothes to a beggar, he clad himself in the *soccus* (of sack-cloth or hair-cloth) and set out for the neighbouring town of Manresa, mentioned above, where he lived upon bread and water procured with alms; fasted every day except Sunday; chastised his flesh with chains and iron whips; and rested only on the bare ground. At Manresa, he passed a whole year; commenced the study of grammar among schoolboys; and composed the famous Exercises. Monserrat used to boast the possession of the sword which he dedicated on the altar of the Virgin. But it has disappeared; and the claim of the church of Belen, in Barcelona, to have it now, is doubtful and denied.

The supreme interest of the chapel centres, of course, in the Sacred Image of the Virgin, which, dressed in a rich white garment fringed with gold, sits high above the altar. She holds her Infant on her knee, both figures being black, and carved (it is said) out of the same piece of wood. At certain hours admission is given to see the image closely, and it is approached from behind. The entry is made through a saloon, in which are kept the offerings made to her ladyship by the great and the wealthy—such of them, that is, as have survived time and war—with the humbler but perhaps sincerer tributes of the gratitude of simple people, who believed themselves to have been saved by her in the hour of peril. Sailors' hats and clothes suspended on the wall recall the beloved Venusian, with his—

Me tabula sacer
Votiva paries indicat uvida
Suspendisse potenti
Vestimenta maris deo.

And there are not only curious *tabulae*, depicting cases of miraculous preservation; but some beautiful specimens of antique lace, for which Catalonia was once as famous as for jewellery and silver-work, before she had become a retail dépôt for French goods, and a centre for the manufacture of second-rate cotton-stuffs, which no amount of the most bigoted "Protection" can coddle into excellence. Having lingered some minutes in this saloon, the tourist may see, if he likes, a room, the walls of which are painted over—in an inferior style—with the legend already narrated, of Joan Gari. Now comes the ascent of the stairs leading up to the image—the *Mare de Deu de Monserrat*. Preparations are here made to impress the visitor's mind with a salutary awe. There are white statues placed, with finger on lip, bearing the monitory epigraph—"Sube y calla—Mount and be silent!" You mount and are silent, and find yourself in a little room, in the front of which the image sits, presiding over the chapel, with its back towards you. One by one the party are allowed to stand upon a little stool on her right, and to contemplate her closely; while a monk with downcast eyes, and slightly inclined head, stands silently by. The face is long, with a nose curving gently, a somewhat pretty face, and with an expression which surprises you by its modern and rather sentimental character. Is it the ancient image that has so strange and varied a history, and which was carried to a place of safety by the monks when the smoke of the French fires rose among these primæval rocks? There are some who say that it is not, but I have seen no proof of this. In either case, to approach so near any object of the transcendent veneration of one's fellow-creatures makes a certain impression even on heretics and sceptics. You take leave of the Lady respectfully—while her countrymen devoutly kiss her hand or her Babe.

Monserrat may now be visited from Barcelona in the course of one long day. But this is fatiguing and unsatisfactory, and it is better to sleep in the aposentos of S. Alphonso and return next afternoon.

Yes or No?

A PLEBISCITUM IN THE DUCHY OF GEROLSTEIN.

I.

THERE was a fine to-do in the town of Gerolstein on that famous morning when two trumpeters were seen to issue from the Ducal palace, preceded by two heralds, and followed by two drummers, and when this procession of six, to which presently the Burgomaster was added, walked in state to the Rathhaus and posted up on the principal door a proclamation headed : “ *RODOLPHUS III., by the dispensation of Providence and the National Will, GRAND DUKE OF GEROLSTEIN : To all whom these Presents may concern, greeting.* ” The Gerolsteiners had possibly been on the look-out for some such event as this, for no sooner were the Burgomaster and his troop descried than immediately there was a rush. Seven-and-twenty citizens taking refreshments in a café opposite the Rathhaus darted across the road. Nine-and-thirty ragamuffins, occupied in doing nothing at the corners of the great square, where the municipal edifice stood, joined in pursuit. Sixteen small boys just let out from school set up a halloo ; and three cripples, drawn along in the vortex, clattered over the paving-stones with their crutches and grasped desperately about them for support. The two trumpeters, the two heralds, the two drummers, and the Burgomaster, undaunted by this display of excitement, stood bravely together. But just as the foremost citizen was reaching the Rathhaus the biggest of the two trumpeters (for one was bigger than the other) put his instrument to his lips and made such a braying that the whole crowd stopped short as if galvanized, and rammed their fingers into their ears. This, however, was only a momentary interruption. The first shock over, everybody pushed forward again. The biggest of the two trumpeters was squeezed flat against a wall ; the Burgomaster, in trying to pick up his hat, which had somehow gone away, was bowled over on to all-fours ; one of the cripples was knocked down ; and the smallest of the two trumpeters, feeling the elbow of a fat man on his waistband, yelled piteously for help. But as everybody wanted to read the proclamation, no attention was paid to these episodes. The principal door of the Rathaus was just wide enough to admit four of a row ; so that it became a delicate matter when two hundred or more—for the crowd was increasing every moment—insisted upon getting to the front, and sought to attain this object by clambering over each other’s shoulders, kicking each other on the shins, and exchanging personal invectives. There is no saying what might have happened had not one of the heralds suddenly

cried at the top of his voice that there was no need to push, as he had plenty more copies of the proclamation under his tabard. This, of course, occasioned a diversion. The herald was instantaneously mobbed, hustled, and notwithstanding his indignant protests, despoiled of every proclamation he possessed. After which, the Gerolsteiners, perceiving that the second herald had only got a pastepot and brush, and that nothing was to be had of him, broke up into animated groups, leaving the space fronting the Rathaus in possession of the three cripples, two of the small boys, and three or four corpulent persons, who, being averse to gymnastics, had taken no part in the scurry. The two flattened trumpeters then tried to regain their breath by patting each other on the back and wheezing in unison ; the plundered herald appealed for sympathy in his trouble to his brother of the pastepot ; the two drummers examined their drums all over to see that there were no bumps on them ; and the Burgomaster, having recovered his hat, brushed it indignantly with the sleeve of his coat, and shook his fist at the crowd, crying, "*Schafskopfen !*" which is the German rendering for *blockheads* !

Here is the proclamation which the Gerolsteiners were so anxious to read :—

"PEOPLE OF GEROLSTEIN !

"I HAVE given you twice nine years of peace and prosperity not unattended with glory. Eighteen years ago, when I installed myself in the Ducal throne of Gerolstein without asking your permission, you gave proof of tact by ratifying the self-appointment I had made ; and, further, evinced your regard for truth by declaring, in an almost unanimous vote, that my flattering antecedents, as well as the scrupulously honourable way in which I had discharged a trust you had already reposed in me, inspired you with the fullest confidence in my aptitude for the task of governing you. Acting upon a precedent long established in Gerolstein, I forthwith submitted to you the project of a new constitution, which you approved with enthusiasm, even as you had approved some dozen other constitutions before, and would, no doubt, approve any dozen more hereafter which it might please me or my successors to propose to you. Not that you are versatile, O People of Gerolstein ! nor flippant, nor servile, as certain people pretend. You are, on the contrary, a courtly nation, well-bred, obedient, and imbued to a rare extent with the expediency of always remaining on good terms with your Duke for the time being. Thus, I am proud to say, after two-and-twenty years of intercourse, that we have never once quarrelled ; for I have never expressed a wish or a whim but you have hastened to gratify it with perfect alacrity, good taste, and obedience. Whenever I have asked for money you have given it me without seeking to know the use of it ; whenever I have felt in a warlike mood you have equipped me with troops and fleets, and not pulled too wry a face when the troops came back crippled, the fleets dismantled, and I had nothing to show you as compensation. Further-

more, in the long duel I have fought against my inveterate enemy, the Hydra of Anarchy, I am pleased to acknowledge that you have always lent me the most ready and considerate succour. Journalists, historians, liberal politicians, and other fomenters of discord, have met with no more sympathy at your hands than they have at mine. When I imprisoned or banished them you did me the inestimable service of turning them into ridicule, so that more than one man of talent who might have become a dangerous antagonist for me, had you given him any encouragement, has ended by coming over to my side, feeling there were no thanks to be got by advocating your 'grievances.' In a word, O People of Gerolstein! you have been loyal subjects, subservient, tractable, and so uniformly patient, that, in looking back now upon my eighteen years' reign, I am struck by this admirable result—that although I have increased your taxes with unvarying regularity year after year; although I have led you into more bootless wars than any sovereign I can for the moment call to mind; although I have doubled your national debt; and although I have laid a complete embargo on that liberty of pen and speech which you profess to hold more dear than life itself: yet your confidence in me remains unshaken, and you are as ready now as ever you were to give me your money, your votes, or any other mortal thing I might ask of you. This disposition does you so much credit that I have determined on writing this appeal to solicit your suffrages under new, and somewhat peculiar circumstances. That famous constitution which we proclaimed together eighteen years ago, and which was to have lasted for ever, has, I am sorry to say, grown a little rusty. There are even one or two places where it is cracked altogether (though the fault is not mine, I assure you), and the object of the present request is to ask for your formal assent to certain unavoidable emendations which I have been compelled, very much against my will, to introduce into it. Do not be alarmed, however; for the alterations are, in the main, insignificant. There will be small change in my Ministers, smaller still in my Parliament, and no change at all in me. To use a homely metaphor, O People of Gerolstein! the drink sold at the tavern will be the same, although there will be a new sign-board and one or two fresh waiters. Nevertheless, slight as these changes are, I have reasons of my own for desiring that they should be ratified with as much publicity and solemnity as possible; for, albeit I have not been in the habit of consulting you except when it suited me, I have always thought, and I think still, that everything done without you is illegal. On Sunday, the 8th proximo, therefore, you will all be convoked together in your comitia, and bidden to answer Yes or No to the following question:—

"DO YOU, OR DO YOU NOT, APPROVE THE CHANGES I HAVE INTRODUCED INTO THE CONSTITUTION, AND RATIFY THE RECENT DECREE OF MY UPPER HOUSE, WHICH DECLARES FOR THE FOURTH OR FIFTH TIME THAT I AND MY HEIRS SHALL RULE OVER YOU PERPETUALLY?

"And, in order that there may be no misunderstanding as to what reply you should make to this inquiry, I now say:—

"Let all of you who are orderly people, fond of peace and good-living, virtuous, even-minded, and desirous of dying comfortably in your beds, without being butchered by lawless cut-throats, answer: 'Yes.'

"But let all of you who are idle vagabonds, associates of thieves and habitual criminals, rascals with a thirst for plunder and a desire to have the eyes of my police fixed on you, answer: 'No.'

"Your Duke,

"Verbum sap. sat.

"RODOLPHUS.

"P.S.—To prevent mistakes, a voting-paper with the word 'Yes' will be sent to every one of you. All other papers, bearing the word 'No,' you will do well to tear up as subversive, incendiary, and likely to lead to unpleasantness if found in your possession."

Now, amongst the persons who read this proclamation in the Rathaus Platz, was a certain Rothwein. He was not much of a citizen was this Rothwein. The Commissary of Police, Blutwurst, had the poorest possible opinion of him; Herr von Dunderkopf, the Judge of the Correctional Tribunal, had predicted that he would end badly; and Baron von Nichtsthun, the Minister of the Interior, had said of him, with a sigh, that if there were many men like this Rothwein in the Duchy, he—Nichtsthun—would be obliged to resign his seals. The fact is, Rothwein was troublesome. He had a newspaper of his own, in which he often spoke scornfully of Blutwurst, and laughed at Dunderkopf, and turned Nichtsthun into ridicule. Moreover, he showed no respect for Count von Tost und Wasser, the Prime Minister; and, what was infinitely more serious than all this, he frequently said unpleasant things of his Serene Highness the Grand Duke Rodolphus and of her Serene Highness the Grand Duchess Iphigenia. Rothwein was a member of the Reichsrath, which made it difficult to deal with him. Had he been a simple journalist there would have been no trouble in disposing of him by a term of imprisonment more or less protracted. But, by the law of Gerolstein, certain immunities were accorded to members of the Reichsrath, and the Commissary Blutwurst had no power to seize Rothwein after dark and convey him off to prison, there to abide six months without trial, as was frequently done in the case of lesser Gerolsteiners, unprotected by the Ducal constitution. Naturally one or two persons argued that this quasi-impunity should have been an inducement to Rothwein to be magnanimous and to hold his peace; but Rothwein, whose moral sense was perhaps crooked, declined to see it in this light, and even had the bad taste to rejoice aloud, that he could not be arrested without being sure of a trial. So much cynicism pained honest folk; and at the time Duke Rodolphus issued his proclamation, Rothwein was by no means in good odour with the public. People were just then very enthusiastic about the new Minister, Tost und Wasser, who had supplanted the Minister Bubblewitz; and they bitterly accused Rothwein of not doing justice to that great man. But to this Rothwein answered, that

he did not believe in Tost und Wasser any more than he believed in Bubblewitz ; and that as there was as much taxing, soldiering, and prosecuting under the new state of things as there had been before, he could not see what one had gained by the change. "Tost und Wasser may mean well," said he, "but he is weak ; and he is so pleased to find himself in a gold-laced coat, that he does nothing else but look at himself in the glass to see how it fits him." Needless to remark, that this flippant way of alluding to a Cabinet Minister was sternly resented by all order-loving patriots, and Rothwein had the satisfaction of reading every morning, in the Government prints, that he was a dangerous citizen ; and that if the reign of liberty were never established in Gerolstein it would certainly be he who would be to blame for it.

Rothwein had not been amongst those who had jostled the Herr Burgomaster and plundered his herald ; but he had bought a copy of the proclamation from one of the ragamuffins for five silber-groschen, and had then retired to the café opposite the Rathhaus, in order to read it in peace. He had scarcely read ten lines, however, before he bounded from his chair and rushed out on to the pavement to call a cab.) The square was by that time alive and swarming with people. There was a mighty hubbub, too, for, according to the wont of the Gerolsteiners, everybody was gesticulating and discoursing at his loudest, without paying any attention to his neighbour. Just as Rothwein appeared, something new was preparing. The Burgomaster, who had seemingly ended by recovering his equanimity as well as his head-dress, had marshalled his trumpeters, heralds, and drummers in a row, and was giving them a word of command. Speedily a loud blast, together with a prolonged rolling of drums, rent the air, and the same instant the Herr Burgomaster, waving his hat three times above his head, shouted : "Long live our Grand Duke Rodolphus !" a cry which was immediately taken up with amazing vigour by the three cripples, the small boys, and all the available ragamuffins, though not by the respectable bystanders. "Hurray !" piped the cripples ; "Hooray !" squeaked the small boys ; "Hurrah !" bawled the ragamuffins ; and one of these last, who was standing near Rothwein, put so much spirit into his exercise, that the Tribune, grown indignant, caught hold of him and shook him by the neck.—

"What are you shouting for, you booby ?" he asked.

"Don't !—Let me go !" gasped the booby.

"What are you shouting for ?" repeated Rothwein.

"I don't know," whined the other. "They gave me a *gulden* to shout."

"You're a dog," rejoined Rothwein. "There's a thaler for you to hold your tongue. Go and fetch me a fly."

But this episode had attracted the attention of several amongst the crowd, and Rothwein being recognized, he was soon surrounded by a gaping throng, from amidst which at once uprose a cry, "Rothwein, Rothwein, tell us what this proclamation means !" "How are we to vote ?" "Rothwein, shall you say 'Yes' or 'No' ?"

Others, going straight to the point, clamoured for a speech ; and, as this proposal had the merit of being practical, it was soon adopted by the whole crowd—barring one or two gentlemen, who looked suspiciously like emissaries of the Commissary Blutwurst, and who made praiseworthy attempts to turn the excitement into a dynastic channel, by shouting with rare tenacity, “ Long live the Gra-a-and Doo-oo-ook ! ” At first, Rothwein took no heed of the clamours, only shrugging his shoulders and humming a tune *sotto voce*. But when at last a fly had been fetched him, and he had taken his seat in it—and yet the people still refused to let him go, determining not to be baulked of their harangue—he stood up and said grimly, though with great politeness and with his hat off : “ Gerolsteiners, you want me to make you a speech, and I think it a pity to disappoint you ”—(Here there was a dead hush). “ Our precious Grand Duke has just issued a proclamation which you don’t understand, but which you have been cheering lustily nevertheless, according to your time-honoured habit. I am not sure that it will benefit you greatly to have his Highness’s message interpreted to you ; but, if you think it will, here is the pith of it in very few words :—Our Grand Duke is going to make a fool of you, as he has done numerous times before, and as he will do on many future occasions again, should Heaven spare him a long life. But you must not be surprised at this, for so long as there are peoples like yourselves, there will be Dukes like this Rodolphus ; and the only wonder is, that you should not be made fools of more frequently. Continue, O Gerolsteiners, to be the lively, chirping, feather-headed, purposeless nation of caper-cutters I have always known you to be, and I promise you shall never want for Dukes to bamboozle you, nor for moralists to tell you, as I now do, with the utmost respect and the sincerest conviction—that it serves you right ! ”

This said, the Tribune Rothwein put on his hat again, and said to the cabman, “ Drive to the Palace of the Reichsrath.” And then he rode off, leaving the Gerolsteiners looking for all the world as if they thought the joke a poor one.

II.

On arriving at the Parliament House Rothwein found a scene of almost as much animation as at the Rathhaus Platz. The news of the proclamation had had time to spread half over the town, and members of the Reichsrath were rattling up every moment in broughams, phaetons, or cabs, to talk over the event and hold counsel upon it. Whatever lingering doubts Rothwein may have preserved as to the true significance of the Grand Duke’s message were dispelled at once when he set foot within the House ; for he had only to glance at the faces of some of his colleagues to perceive that his perspicacity had not been at fault. There were certain legislators, liege-vassals of the ex-Minister Bubblewitz, and who had not been seen to smile ever since that statesman had retired *vice* Tost und Wasser, who were now radiant. The Deputy Kartofeln was laughing

with all his might at a joke of the Deputy Dummerkerl's. Kartofeln, who had been laid up with the jaundice, on hearing that the new Ministry intended to bring in a Reform Bill! Herr Weissnicht and Herr Gehtnicht, two honourable utilities, who had sat so long in the House that they could sleep a whole debate through without being awoke by the speeches, were shaking each other's hands hysterically and inviting one another to dinner. The Deputy Ganser, who represented a district where no less than one elector out of every two hundred could read, was gratifying himself with a hornpipe in a corner. And another bright specimen of representative humanity, the Herr von Spinach, who had once held a seat in the Bubblewitz Cabinet, and had never been able to comprehend why he had been turned out, was running his fingers through his hair and muttering in tones of unmixed felicity, "*Mein Gott! heute bin ich zufrieden.*" On the other hand, however, all the members who were supposed to have placed their trust in Tost und Wasser were looking glum—oh, so glum! Rothwein, who had meditated saying a few epigrammatic things at their expense, felt his wit disarmed. He had not even courage to say that generous "I told you so," which our friends never fail to lay as a balm upon our wounds when they have seen us come to grief. In passing by the Deputy Milchbrod, a benign legislator, who always liked to take the best view of things, but who, on this occasion, was twirling his thumbs in pensive melancholy, he held out his hand and said: "What is the matter, Herr Milchbrod?" and to this Milchbrod answered with a sigh, "Oh, nothing is the matter," which was a pious falsehood; for there *was* something the matter, and Milchbrod knew it. But to make all this more clear we had better, perhaps, take a short retrospective survey of political events in Gerolstein, during the reign of the Grand Duke Rodolphus.

A few months previously to his proclamation Rodolphus III., having then reigned eighteen years, had begun to find that his position was getting a little bit shaky, and that his subjects no longer felt for him that boundless admiration to which, rightly or wrongly, he considered himself entitled. This alarmed Rodolphus, for, as he had been at some trouble in securing the throne, he naturally felt the most extreme reluctance to part with it, and the barest allusion to the possibility of a catastrophe threw him into fits of gloom, during which he became ferocious and formidable to his acquaintances. To do him justice, if his subjects gave tokens of discontent it was not altogether because he ruled them badly. His rule was no doubt detestable, but the main objection to it in the eyes of certain Gerolsteiners, was that it had lasted eighteen years; and this would have been a damning blot on any rule, no matter how wise and how beneficent. As a matter of fact the Gerolsteiners were not very competent judges on the score of good government. They had had a Duke who was a mighty man of valour, and gave them an uncommon deal of warring, so that they were delighted to see him go. Next came two Dukes who fought in moderation, for which the Gerolsteiners despised them heartily. After that came a Duke who was a man of peace and disposed to treat them

kindly ; but him, after nearly twenty years' reign, they drove out with every mark of ignominy and contempt ; setting up in his stead a new sort of government with nobody at the helm, which proved about as fantastic a contrivance as anything that had been seen for many a long day in Gerolstein. Instructed by the fate of his predecessors the new Duke Rodolphus made up his mind that what the Gerolsteiners loved above all things was novelty, and that for the sake of change they would gladly barter a new coat for an old one, a sound head for a broken one, or a government of honest men for a government of rascallions. He accordingly set to work ruling them on spasmodic principles. Whenever he had anything new to announce to them, either a war or a reform or a new repressive law (and of this last novelty the Grand Duke took care there should always be a liberal supply), he did it suddenly, without previous warning, as one lets off a pistol or a cracker. And this system proved an excellent one, for the Gerolsteiners, being plunged from one sensation into another, ended by growing so confused that they no longer knew whether they were standing on their heads or their heels, and even came to fancy that they were being governed intelligently, just as men fancy they are walking straight when they are drunk and stagger along in zigzags. However, there is a flaw in the system which is this, that novelties sometimes run short. A man who wants to keep unruly dogs in order can only throw bones at them so long as he has bones to throw ; and Duke Rodolphus having got rid of all his stock of bones began to dread lest he should be obliged to throw some of his dinner—to wit, certain prerogatives of his own to which he was fondly attached, and which he had not the slightest inclination to surrender. The party in the State who barked for more bones were not precisely a majority, but they made as much noise as if they were. His Serene Highness would have been glad to silence them by firing grape-shot at their heads, and he was warmly seconded in this view by his Minister of War, the General Boum, who repeatedly asked to be allowed to go out and exterminate the enemy. But Duke Rodolphus was growing old, and he had no longer so much faith in the efficacy of grape-shot as he had once had. The Minister Bubblewitz was called upon for his opinion, and opined for more repressive laws. The Grand Duchess Iphigenia, who was an amiable lady, but whose notions on politics were as hazy as those of most pretty women, agreed with Bubblewitz. The Duke, however, was afraid. The clamours of the more-bones party, headed by Count von Tost and Wasser, were growing each moment louder. His Highness threw out a delicate hint to Bubblewitz, that, perhaps, if he resigned his seals to the Count, the sacrifice might be appreciated by the public ; but Bubblewitz declined to accept this hint. There was nothing for it but decisive action. The Duke, after smoking a boxful of cigarettes, to bring his courage to the starting point, one bright morning turned the whole Bubblewitz Ministry out of doors, and entrusted the forming of a new Cabinet to the liberal Tost und Wasser.

Now, Count von Tost und Wasser was certainly as honourable a

statesman as had ever fingered a portfolio. He was honourable from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, and budded all over with good intentions like a rose-bush. But, unfortunately for him, he was descended from two families of diametrically opposite instincts, the family of Tost and that of Wasser : the former an energetic race, that had often faced the fire, and was hardened in consequence : the latter a somewhat lymphatic family, apt to be too soon ruffled and diverted from its course by contrary winds. So long as the two opposite elements in the Count's nature worked in unison, there was nothing much to apprehend, for the one tempered the other. But whenever one characteristic became predominant, things were liable to go wrong. At first, there was nothing to complain of. The Count, delighted to find himself Prime Minister, made an infinite number of eloquent speeches, which transported the Gerolsteiners, so that they waxed enthusiastic, and, as we have already stated, evinced their indignation against Rothwein, who refused to be enthusiastic too. To hear people talk of Tost und Wasser, one would have fancied that the unlucky Gerolsteiners had never known such a thing as a respectable Minister. All sorts of grave old gentlemen, who had been wont to compare Rodolphus III. disparagingly with past Grand Dukes and to look askance at him, now came forward, and declared that the moment Count von Tost und Wasser was at the head of affairs, they consented to think better of Rodolphus. Even the *Paradoxische Zeitung*, a paper much in honour at Gerolstein, from having never flattered anybody, and having always advocated the same set of principles (a thing very rare in Gerolstein!)—even this paper announced, through the pen of its editor, the talented Professor von Paradochs, that the Tost und Wasser Cabinet deserved to be supported if it only kept true to its promises. All this, however, was too good to last. The new Chief Adviser of the Grand Duke, like those aéronauts who have been shot too abruptly into the clouds, began to feel his head turn. Gradually the Tost side of his nature came uppermost. He fell to talking about himself and laying down plans for the future. He said, “*I shall do this,*” or, “*I shall not do this,*” and hurled defiance at his enemies. No doubt he meant well ; but his Serene Highness the Grand Duke, who had been silently noticing that people now made great use of the name Tost und Wasser, and spoke scarcely at all of Rodolphus, ended by forming the sagacious reflection that if this sort of thing were allowed to go on much longer, the Gerolsteiners might very possibly discover that a Grand Duke was by no means necessary to their happiness. “*By the sword of my father!*” said he, swearing his ducal oath, “*but it seems to me this man takes his part in earnest;*” and Rodolphus III., with a dark frown on his countenance, bethought him of his Minister, Bubblewitz, whose merits, being of a decidedly negative sort, had never given him cause for uneasiness. We here open a parenthesis, O Parliamentary and Constitutional Reader! to remark that you must not be surprised or incensed at Rodolphus. Look at the matter from what point of view you will, a Duke who has wielded despotic power cannot be

expected to feel great sympathy for a Tost und Wasser, who seems disposed to supplant him. In vain will you point out to that Duke that other Dukes in neighbouring States manage to get on very well with nothing of dukeship but the name: this mode of reasoning will be no more conclusive than if you were to observe to one of us that plenty of people in a neighbouring street manage to exist without breakfast. Rodolphus III. would gladly have turned constitutional to please his subjects, provided he might have remained despotic to please himself. His ideal of parliamentary government was the possession of ten Ministers who would assume the responsibility of all unpopular measures, but allow him to reap the glory of all popular decrees. This, too, was Bubblewitz's ideal of government; for, as that great statesman exclaimed very wisely, "What would it signify to me how unpopular I was, so long as I were allowed to keep my place!" But, unhappily for Tost und Wasser, *his* ideal seemed to be different.

One morning Tost und Wasser, on going to the palace to hold a council, found Rodolphus III. and the Grand Duchess seated together in the Grand Duke's study. From the animated look on their faces, and from the rapid glances they exchanged as the Prime Minister entered, it was pretty apparent that they had been holding important conversation; and the experienced eye of Tost und Wasser (for his eye had become experienced in office) at once detected on a chair a hat, which had evidently been left there by an oversight, and which looked suspiciously like the hat of the ex-Minister, Bubblewitz. This sight filled him with a strange presentiment, which was not immediately dispelled when the Duke said to him, in that polite but impenetrable tone he possessed, "That is the project of the new Parliamentary Constitution in your pocket, Count?"

"Yes, Highness," responded the Minister, extracting a ream of paper from the tails of his embroidered coat.

"Ah, very well. I have the utmost confidence in you, and I am prepared to sign the document at once."

"Your Highness does me too much honour," rejoined Tost und Wasser, heaving a sigh of relief.

"Yes, prepared to sign it at once," proceeded the Grand Duke, blandly. "Only"—and here his Serene Highness gave a slight cough, whilst her Serene Highness the Duchess fanned herself rapidly—"only I am going to add a slight clause of my own to it." And Rodolphus III. unfolded a little piece of notepaper which he had been holding in his hand.

"It's not much," added he, with a calm smile at his Minister—"not much. The scope of it is simply this—that I shall always have power to suppress your Constitution when I grow tired of it."

The Prime Minister, Tost und Wasser, turned pale.

"But—but—Prince," he faltered, "that wouldn't be parliamentary at all."

"Oh yes, it would," answered the Grand Duke, pleasantly. "Look here, for instance: suppose I find my Parliament growing bumptious—mind you, I only say 'suppose.' Well, it is just possible I should like to give it a lesson in good manners. Perhaps I might abolish it temporarily and lock a few of the members up; only, in order to make everything legal, I should convoke my people three weeks afterwards and ask them whether they approved of what I had done? That's parliamentary enough surely!"

His Excellency the Count von Tost und Wasser pulled a wry face. He had a lively recollection of a certain lesson in good manners given eighteen years before by the Grand Duke Rodolphus to a Parliament of which he, Tost und Wasser, formed part; and he perfectly remembered the convocation of the people a few weeks afterwards to pronounce an opinion on this lesson. It is to be presumed that neither of the reminiscences were particularly gratifying, for the Prime Minister remained silent and glanced piteously at the hat of his predecessor, Bubblewitz, which appeared to be grinning at him diabolically.

Rodolphus III. took some Turkish tobacco out of a pouch and began twirling a cigarette. The Grand Duchess Iphigenia opened a bonbonniere on the table and nibbled a few sugar-plums.

"I also purpose," continued the Duke, striking a match, "to convoke my people to a preliminary Plebiscitum without delay. I wish to give them an opportunity of declaring that they love me now as much as they ever did. Such a declaration will serve me as a warrant in case—ahem!—in case my Parliament should ever be disposed to forget who is the real master in Gerolstein."

Count von Tost und Wasser winced, but still remained silent. The hat of the statesman Bubblewitz was grinning more diabolically than ever.

"I hope you are of the same way of thinking as I, Count," added Rodolphus, with perhaps the faintest tinge of sardonic emphasis on the word *hope*. "I should be sorry to part with you."

What was Count von Tost und Wasser to do? No doubt had he there and then explained to the Duke that his Serene Highness's notions as to parliamentary government were not cast in the same mould as those which he himself professed to hold—no doubt had he done this and laid down his portfolio to prove that he was in earnest, Rodolphus III. might have been placed in a delicate predicament and have left the cigarette, which he was then complacently smoking, unfinished. The truth is, Tost und Wasser could have better afforded to fall out with Rodolphus than Rodolphus to fall out with him, and he was a ninny for not seeing it. But when *do* we see things as we ought to see them? Just at the very moment when his Tost characteristics would have been of most use to him, the Wasser portion of the Minister's temperament unexpectedly came uppermost. He saw himself threatened with dismissal and obliged to forego the blandishments and koo-tooings which had made the past

few months of his life so unprecedently sweet to him ; and the vision gave him a sort of cold sensation in the back. He stammered, reddened, made a show of depositing his portfolio, caught it up again, wiped his forehead with his handkerchief, and ended by exclaiming meekly,—

" Very well, your Highness, it shall be as you wish."

Had he been quick enough to notice the bright twinkle that lit up the eyes of the Grand Duke Rodolphus at these words, and the arch smile that flitted over the pretty lips of the Duchess Iphigenia, poor Tost und Wasser might have guessed that in the bargain he had just struck, he had not got altogether the best of it. As it was, he fancied he could hear something disagreeably like a snigger issue from behind the curtain which separated the ducal study from another apartment. And he would have wagered a ducat that he had heard just such a snigger before issue from the lips of Bubblewitz. It was on the morrow of this interesting conversation between Rodolphus III. and his Minister that the Herr Burgomaster posted up the ducal proclamation at the Rathhaus ; that the Tribune Rothwein made his speech from the fly, and that certain other memorable events took place, which we are about to chronicle.

III.

We left the Tribune Rothwein shaking hands in the Parliament House with the Deputy Milchbrod, and looking with an eye of compassion on the members of the Tost und Wasser party. These unfortunate Deputies, erewhile so exulting, were huddling close together much after the fashion of newly-shorn sheep over whom a sharp east wind is blowing ; one was almost surprised not to see their teeth chatter. When Rothwein arrived at the House his Excellency the Prime Minister had not yet put in an appearance, but was expected every moment. Everybody wanted to see him : the members who supported him and were looking so blank ; the members who pretended to support him but in reality hated him for ousting Bubblewitz, and were only waiting for an occasion to pay off old scores ; and the members who, like Rothwein, neither hated nor supported him, but thought poorly of his capacity, and were anathematized by the other two parties (especially by the Bubblewitzers) for a set of factions, intriguing churls. It was close upon two o'clock : at two o'clock the sittings of the Reichsrath begin, and this time a stormy debate was expected. Already the door outside leading to the strangers' gallery was blocked up by a respectable serpentine *queue* of some two hundred yards' length ; and tickets were being hotly bidden for at five or six thalers apiece. Inside the House the lobbies offered the animated spectacle of some couple of dozen honourable members being chased into corners and round pillars by exasperated constituents who wanted orders, and found it impossible to obtain them. Six or seven ladies who had managed to glide in, sentries and ushers notwithstanding, were expostulating with new-fledged Deputies on the tender side of forty, and

laughing to scorn the idea that there being no more room in the House was a sufficient excuse for issuing no more tickets. Three messengers were being reduced to a condition of idiocy by having cards forced into their hands by dozens of people at once, and being enjoined to convey them to members who had not yet come, or who were absent on leave, or who were sulky and answered the messengers by telling them in expressive vernacular to go *zum Teufel*. A few journalists, with no hats on and voluminous note-books in their hands, were darting about in search of echoes, and preparing groans and gnashing of teeth for editors by pencilling off sheets of illegible manuscript. Calm and impassive amidst this scene of hubbub stood a picket of soldiers, a drummer and two officers, the guard of honour waiting to escort the Herr President from his private apartments to the debate-room.

Of a sudden there was a cry, "Here he comes," a pattering of feet, a throwing wide of folding doors, and at the sound the whole crowd,—members, constituents, journalists, ladies, and messengers—rushed along together to catch a sight of his Excellency the Prime Minister. Yes, there he came, holding his head high—a trifle too high perhaps for a man quite sure of himself; for we have no need to be so brazen when we have nothing to fear. On both sides of him heads were uncovered, and bowed down like ears of corn set in motion by a breeze. Members of the Right, members of the Left, members of the Centre, all raised their hats; for people are civil in Gerolstein, and the fact that an honourable gentleman will, in five minutes' time, accuse his Excellency of duplicity, turpitude, and three or four out of the seven deadly sins, does not make the slightest difference in the respect with which he salutes him in the lobby. Of course, however, there were various shades in the degrees of alacrity evinced by the members. The most effusive were the Bubblewitzers, who behaved at the sight of his Excellency as if they had beheld their dearest friend. There had been a time when the Count von Tost und Wasser, knowing what these demonstrations were worth, had never been able to refrain from smiling when he saw a Bubblewitzer come forward and worship him; but, alas! these times were past now. To the horror and disgust of his followers, the Prime Minister smiled a smile of welcome to the Deputy Weissnicht, and held out his hand to Gehtnicht, and spoke soothingly to the Deputy Kartofeln. On the contrary, happening to catch the eye of Rothwein, he did his best to wither up that tribune by a look of ineffable scorn, and as Rothwein was not the man to receive such a look without paying it back with compound interest, a somewhat unparliamentary interchange of compliments might have ensued, had not, fortunately for the dignity of the Gerolsteinian legislature, the hour of two opportunely struck; upon which, the picket of soldiers already mentioned presented arms, the two officers unsheathed their swords, the drummer beat a rattatoo, and his Excellency the President, majestic in a swallow-tail coat and a star of brilliants, emerged suddenly from a door, darted across the lobby, and vanished into the debate-room, whither he was instantly followed by the

two hundred and ninety members of the Reichsrath, who swarmed into their places as if they were storming a battery ; whilst a lean and wizen usher, with a chain round his neck, shouted as loud as he could manage : " Hats off, if you please, gentlemen, hats off; the Herr President has taken his seat and the sitting has commenced ! "

There was " gunpowder in the air," as soldiers say. The atmosphere was charged with that moral electricity which is as fatally premonitory of a row, as physical electricity is of a thunderstorm. The strangers' galleries were crowded to bursting. In the Ambassadors' tribune the whole feminine contingent of the Corps Diplomatique were at their posts armed with opera-glasses. In the journalists' box, originally designed to hold thirty, five-and-fifty wretched men of letters were sitting on each other's laps, crouching over each other's shoulders, and staving-in each other's ribs. In the Senators' tribune a fine collection of the Bubblewitz party were mustered ; and these venerable conscript fathers being for the most part deaf, or stricken with lumbago, or afflicted with gout, looked much like a 'bus-full of patients from the Hospital of Incurables. Naturally the Government benches were full. The Prime Minister was in his place, biting his lips and defiant, like all men who are not quite pleased with themselves ; next him, Baron Nichtsthun, gazing apprehensively at his bugbear Rothwein, and wondering whether that man would ever die ; further on, the Ministers Pinteflasch, Mangel-Wurzel and Kalbsbraten, and the General Boum, who, by the way, was a fixture in the Cabinet, having sat therein under Bubblewitz, and having no intention of resigning, no matter who might be at the head of the Ministry or what might be his opinions. The only Ministerial seat left unoccupied was that of the honest Herr Butterkopf, Minister for Public Expenses. As this Minister was usually one of the first in his seat, his absence was soon remarked ; but we shall see presently what was the cause of it.

No time was lost in useless parleying. The members were hardly settled down in their places than the Deputy Rothwein rose from his seat on the extreme left of the President, and cried in a vibrating voice which rang through the building : " I desire to question the Government as to the significance of the strange document with which we have been favoured this morning. I should like to know what it means. Is it a trap, or is it merely a practical joke ? " (Loud explosion of murmurs on the benches occupied by the Deputies WEISSNIGHT, GEHTNIGHT, SPINACH, and KARTOFELN. " Hear, hear," on those occupied by the Deputies STECKNADEL, BOCKBIER and RINDFLEISCH, supporters of ROTHWEIN.)*

His Excellency Count von TOST UND WASSER (*rising and speaking with vehemence*). I protest against the terms just employed. It is Herr Rothwein's language, and not our gracious Duke's soul-stirring proclamation, which deserves to be laughed at and treated with contumely. (Loud cheers on the Right ; exclamations and confusion on the Left.)

* For greater accuracy's sake, we here quote the parliamentary report which was published in the *Paradoxische Zeitung* and other Gazettes on the following day.

Herr ROTHWEIN. If the Prime Minister thinks to insult me, I beg to tell him that he and his words are beneath contempt. (*Cries of "Order, order."*) His Excellency General BOUM starts up and utters some words which are inaudible in the tumult. His colleagues pull him back by the coat-tails.)

His Excellency President KNIPPER. Herr Rothwein, I call you to order; your words are unparliamentary.

Herr ROTHWEIN. So were his.

The Deputies STECKNADEL, BOCKBIER, and RINDFLEISCH (*all speaking together*). Why don't you call the Prime Minister to order? It was he who began—

The Deputies WEISSNIGHT, GEHTNIGHT, and KARTOFELN. No, it wasn't.

The PRESIDENT. If the Prime Minister had said anything disrespectful towards you I should have requested him to withdraw it. But I heard nothing.

A Voice from one of the Galleries. The Herr President is deaf with one ear; he only hears the unpleasant things that are said on the Left of him. (*Hilarity on the Left benches; confusion on the Right. Cries of "Turn him out!"*)

The PRESIDENT (*hotly*). If this indecent interruption is repeated, I shall have the galleries cleared.

Herr KARTOFELN. I am sure it came from the Journalists' box. Those men are lost to all shame.

The Deputies WEISSNIGHT and GEHTNIGHT. Hear, hear.

At this moment an incident occurred which for a few minutes suspended the debate and gave a new turn to the proceedings. His Excellency Herr Butterkopf suddenly entered, but instead of going to his seat on the Ministerial benches, returned to the place he formerly occupied as simple Deputy. Sensation throughout the whole house. The strangers in the galleries lean out of their boxes the better to contemplate the honourable gentleman. Excitement amongst the journalists. Herr Butterkopf, feeling the eyes of everybody fixed on him, grows red and makes use of his handkerchief.

His Excellency the PRIME MINISTER (*with emotion*). I had intended informing the House, had not the uncalled-for attack of Herr Rothwein diverted me from my purpose, that my colleagues and I have been unfortunately deprived of the co-operation of Herr Butterkopf. We deeply regret the circumstance; but it is a consolation to be able to assure you that the separation is due to no difference of opinion, Herr Butterkopf continuing as enthusiastic an admirer of our policy to-day as he was a valorous exponent of it yesterday. (*Cheers on the Right; expressions of doubt in the Centre; murmurs of incredulity on the Left, with cries of "Why did he resign, then?"*)

Herr BUTTERKOPF (*nervously*). I am deeply—a—deeply touched at the kind way in which the House and—a—the Prime Minister have mentioned my name. I resigned—that is, I felt—a—bound to resign, because

—because— (*Noise on the Right.* Herr BUTTERKOPF is set upon by six or seven members of the Right, who shake him warmly by the hand, but prevent him continuing his explanations.)

Herr ROTHWEIN (*springing to the rostrum*). You resigned because you were an honest man, and wished to keep true to your principles; and that is the reason why your voice is being stifled by those honourable Ministerialists up there. (*Protestations. "Order, order."*) Oh, yes, Order, order. I am used to that cry. You may drown the voice of Herr Butterkopf, but you won't drown mine. Bang away with your desks, rattle away with your paper-knives; I've stood up to have my say, and I'll have it. Here in my hand I've got the proclamation of our Grand Duke Rodolphus, and I've risen to ask you what it means? Three months ago we saw a new Ministry come into office. Most of you cheered at the event. I didn't; for my experience of new Ministries is that they are so exactly like the old ones, that it is a waste of time to rejoice at changes. Well, like new brooms at work, the Ministers began fairly; I will even do them this justice, that they did all they could, considering that every reform had, as it were, to be wrested out of the jowl of the crowned Cerberus who— (*Violent interruption. Prolonged cries of "Order."* His Excellency General BOUM is with difficulty restrained from rushing towards the rostrum with his paper-cutter.)

The PRESIDENT. Every well-conditioned mind will learn with loathing and abhorrence that the term *jowl* has been applied by a member of this House to the angust lips of the Prince whom Providence and the national will have appointed to rule over Gerolstein. Herr Rothwein, I call upon you to retract. (*Loud cheers on the Right.*)

Herr ROTHWEIN. I have no particular predilection for the word *jowl*: let us say *jaws*. (*Uproar*.)

His Excellency General BOUM (*amidst continued uproar*). He said Crowned Cerberus.

Herr ROTHWEIN. I said "Crowned Socrates," not "Crowned Cerberus." ("Oh, oh!" and laughter on the Left.) However, that is beside the question. The person at the head of his Highness's Government understood perfectly what I meant. When he and his colleagues came into power they gave out, amidst universal rejoicings, that they were going to do great wonders; but here have we been sitting nearly five months and what have they done? Nothing but make speeches—*vox et præterea nihil*.

Herr KARTOFELN (*indignantly*). I rise to order. Herr Rothwein has called the Prime Minister an ox of the Nile. (*Sensation—uproar.* His Excellency Herr PINTEFLASCH, Minister of Public Instruction, jumps up and explains in a whisper to the hon. member that *vox et præterea nihil* is a Latin quotation).

The Deputies WEISSNIGHT and GEHTNIGHT (*who have not heard the explanation*). What business has he to insult the deputies of the nation in Greek?

Herr von Spinach. I protest against Hebrew quotations.

From this moment and for the next half-hour the speech of Herr Rothwein becomes inaudible. The ninety members of the Right acting in cordial unison, pound on the floor with their heels, bang the lids of their desks up and down, and beat a *rataplan* with their paper-knives. The hundred and sixty members of the Centre expostulate fiercely, and only succeed in adding to the tumult. The forty members of the Left stand up and roar out invectives, to the alarm of the visitors in the gallery and the exasperation of General Boum, who proffers terrible menaces, and has to be held down in his seat by four of his strongest colleagues. The Herr President, who has caught hold of his hand-bell and is brandishing it convulsively, rises repeatedly to order, but remains unheeded. When Herr Rothwein's voice is heard again, it has become cracked and sounds like a pair of bellows. The hon. member is black in the face, his hair is dishevelled, he is shaking both fists together at his opponents, and is saying furiously :—" But our time will come, no fear. You ask us why we oppose you systematically, why we keep aloof from you? We do it because we don't believe in you. The water of a stream will not run clear if the source itself is polluted. A double-dealing Sovereign makes shuffling Ministers, and shuffling Ministers make tricky laws. Why did you not resign like your colleagues? You are not simpletons, you must see that your power is a farce ; that your Duke has no intention of letting you do as you please, and that, on the day when you try to encroach on his power, he will crush you like nutshells. What is the meaning of this new appeal to the people ? is there a single grain of honest, plain-dealing motive in it ? Why, the terms in which it is drawn up show you it is a mere catch, like everything else that Rodolphus has ever imagined. Whichever way the people vote, you will draw a conclusion favourable to yourselves. If we say 'Yes,' you will infer that we have confidence in your Duke ; if we say 'No,' you will exclaim : 'Ah ! it is not the Duke they are opposed to, but the new reforms.' And what do you think the peasantry know of the question you are going to ask ? During eighteen years you have laid thought under an interdict, gagged free speech, and sent journalists to prison ; nine-tenths of our peasantry could not so much as tell you what a Constitution is. What value can you attach to their opinions ? How are they to discover that the pretended reforms, of which you boast so loudly, are mere hovels built on sand, which your Duke may knock over any minute ? How are they to see that it is not this or that Minister, or this or that law, which stands in the way of serious reform, but the chief of the State himself, who is a greybeard, and not of an age when men put themselves to school to unlearn the principles that have actuated their whole lives ? Mark my words, O Gerolsteiners ! an old eagle does not take kindly to chickweed. Try as you will to domesticate him, he still keeps his claws and his beak, and you learn to your cost, if you attempt to chain him to his perch, what it is to be over-trustful. And now run

off to your polling-booths and vote 'Yes' to this Plebiscitum. Vote 'Yes,' and make your Grand Duke laugh in his sleeve; vote 'Yes,' and please those innocent Ministers who will wear the 'Yes' as proudly round their necks as pet-dogs do their dog-collars; vote 'Yes,' and prove once more that you are the same intelligent people you always were, dancing to any tune your ducal piper chose to play, and barking to anybody who held up a bone to you, without looking to see if there was any meat on it."

This deplorable speech, the impious and disloyal tone of which was heightened tenfold by the gestures with which it was delivered, brought down, as it justly deserved, the wrath of the whole Assembly of Gerolstein on the speaker. Never had been seen such audacity in the memory of living man. The Deputy Kartofeln, crimson with wrath, had loosened his necktie in dread of apoplexy. The Deputies Weissnicht and Gehtnicht, and twenty-three others, worn out with banging their desks, were leaning back in their seats and gasping "Turn him out!" The Deputy Von Spinach and fourteen beside him sat petrified with horror. Even the benign Herr Milchbrod, and with him a large party of the Centre who were of his way of thinking, admitted that such subversive sentiments could not possibly be tolerated, and that it was the duty of all loyal subjects to strengthen the hands of Government, in order that the Duchy of Gerolstein might not become a prey to anarchy. By general consent of his party, Herr Milchbrod rose to his legs to give utterance to these views. He said, amidst loud cheers, "that he had had doubts as to the Plebiscitum, but that these doubts had now been for ever dispelled by the speech—the shameless speech" (*great cheering*) "which he had just heard. Henceforth, it was obvious to him, as it no doubt was to every other well-thinking mind, that the tide of democracy was threatening the basis of the social edifice" (*applause*), "that the cankerworm of communism was gnawing at the very vitals of the monarchical principle" (*sensation*), "that everything that pestilential doctrines could do to poison the current of the national intellect, was being attempted; and that, consequently, those who had any belief in the immortal traditions of religion, or felt the smallest veneration for the sanctity of the domestic hearth, must proclaim a truce to political differences and put their whole faith in Tost und Wasser." When the cheering which followed this remarkable oration had subsided, his Excellency the Prime Minister rose amidst prolonged acclamations; and, mounting the steps of the rostrum, pronounced this thrilling harangue,—

"I thank the Hon. Herr Milchbrod for his patriotic words. Yes, Herr Milchbrod has struck upon the chord of truth; he has stated the case as it stands, placing it in the crude light of hideous reality, neither attenuating nor exaggerating anything. We have been much maligned, gentlemen—I may say cruelly maligned" (*murmurs of sympathy on the Ministerial benches, and looks of indignation at the Deputies ROTHWEIN, STECKNADEL, BOCKBIER, and RINDELEISCH*), "but we forgive our enemies" (*cries of admiration*), "yes, we forgive them; but in their own interests

we will follow them up and exterminate them pitilessly" (*enthusiastic cheering*). "What do they want, these men who pretend to be Liberals and yet come here and revile the most Liberal act that has ever been accomplished? Their zeal on behalf of the people is all a make-believe, their democratic fervour a pretence. You heard how the Deputy Rothwein spoke of our peasantry, that intelligent peasantry which tills our fields and grows the bread which is to nourish us!" (*Emotion.*) "Is there a single member on this side of the House who would speak of those useful and honest agriculturists as the Liberal Herr Rothwein has done?" ("No, no," from the Deputies WEISSNIGHT, GEHTNIGHT, and KARTOFELN.) "Our peasants have been libelled, gentlemen; they are full of good sense and loyalty, and the best proof of their intelligence is, that they will vote as we tell them on the occasion of the coming Plebiscitum. I should have too much to say were I to attempt refuting in detail all the absurd accusations of Herr Rothwein. I scorn such accusations, and so do my colleagues. We have been Liberal all our lives and Liberal we shall continue to be. There will be no coercion about this Plebiscitum; everybody will be free to discuss it as he pleases, and the police will have strict orders not to interfere with anybody, except those who vote against us or who subscribe money for our opponents. The soldiers of Gerolstein, too, will be called upon to vote; but, in order that matters may be managed fairly, and that no perfidious counsels may be whispered into the ears of our brave defenders by factious revolutionists, my honourable and gallant friend, General Boum, will see that every soldier is marched to the polling-booth with an affirmative ticket in his hand; and, I need scarcely add, that any person seen distributing tickets with 'No' on them to the soldiers, will be most promptly and energetically dealt with." (*Cries of "Nothing can be fairer."* *Loud cheers.*) "The press will continue to be as free as it has hitherto been, and every encouragement and facility for sale will be afforded to those papers which agree with us; but, as no Government can be expected to put up with unprovoked assaults, no mercy will be extended to those organs which propagate views in opposition to ours." (*Renewed cheering.*) "I have only to add that the appeal to the people has been decided on in order that the nation might have a signal opportunity of expressing in all liberty its loathing for assassins."

Herr ROTHWEIN (*excitedly*). Whom do you mean by assassins?

His Excellency the PRIME MINISTER (*with calm*). Did I call you an assassin?

Herr ROTHWEIN. I ask you whom you mean by assassins?

His Excellency the PRIME MINISTER. This House will bear me witness that I have carefully avoided using any expression that the most sensitive person might disapprove, but since Herr Rothwein compels me to speak in plain terms, I will no longer conceal that the Government have this very morning obtained information of a plot of the darkest kind directed against the life of our cherished Grand Duke. (*Exclamations; interruptions on the Left; marks of surprise and indignation on the Right.*) Yes,

gentlemen, an "individual,"—a fiend in human shape—was caught wandering this morning in the Ducal park (*emotion*), with a ginger-beer bottle in his pocket (*prolonged sensation*); and the confession subsequently made by this individual tends to show that he had contemplated the fell design of letting fly the cork of his bottle from behind a bush whilst the Grand Duke was out walking (*thrill of horror, renewed emotion*). Nay, more, gentlemen, a copy of a newspaper was found in the pocket of the assassin (*great excitement*), and it is my duty to state that this print,—this guilty print, from which the murderer had evidently drawn his inspirations, was none other than the *Volk's Zeitung*, the organ of Herr Rothwein ! (*Uproars, yells of execration. Herr Rothwein stands up and endeavours, without success, to make himself heard. A scene of indescribable confusion follows his attempt. Cries of "Regicide!" "Villain!" are heard on all sides.*)

The PRESIDENT. Herr Rothwein, when a man has such a load on his conscience as you must have, the best thing he can do is to keep silent.

Herr Rothwein stands up and gesticulates, but his words are again drowned in a unanimous clamour of indignation.

His Excellency the PRIME MINISTER. Justification can be of no avail. The moral complicity of the Rothwein party with the assassin must be apparent to all ; and I trust that the disgust and abhorrence which this plot will everywhere excite, will act as a warning to those who believe that there can be any hope of peace and prosperity for Gerolstein except in the stability of the present Ministry, and a cheerful acquiescence in all the measures which Rodolphus III. and his advisers may think good to propose.

Enthusiastic and prolonged ovation. Treble salvo of applause. His Excellency on descending from the rostrum is surrounded by 250 Deputies, who insist upon shaking him by the hand, and assuring him of their esteem. The sitting is soon after adjourned, and the whole House, President, Ministers, and Deputies—with the exception of the forty members of the Rothwein party—thereupon start off processionaly for the Ducal palace, to present an address to the Sovereign in testimony of their joy at his escape from the hand of an assassin, and of their abomination for "the revolutionary cankerworm which is gnawing at the vitals of the monarchy."

IV.

Some twenty days after this debate the great appeal to the people was over ; and his Serene Highness the Grand Duke was occupied in receiving the congratulations of his friends on the signal majority he had obtained. All the Gerolsteiners who disliked the cankerworm of revolution, or were afraid of ginger-beer bottles, or had an instinctive feeling of antipathy for the Hydra of Anarchy, had gone bravely to the poll and voted "Yes." As for those who had voted "No," they were of course all brigands and assassins,—men with no consciences, evilly disposed towards constituted authorities, and with no respect for the sanctity of the domestic hearth.

That more than one man out of every five hundred understood the full significance of the vote he gave, nobody—not even the Grand Duke—pretended to believe; but this was of no matter whatever. Votes are not weighed in Gerolstein. The opinion of any individual who fancies that the Hydra of Anarchy is a thing on four paws, that is to be met with after nightfall, is of quite as much value as that of an Archbishop or a Cabinet Minister, who knew that the said Hydra is a bogey. Thus, much laughter was excited at the palace by the news that in certain rural constituencies the intelligent rustics had gone to the poll under the impression that Yes was a gentleman of generous mind, devoted to the agricultural interests, whilst No was a dangerous socialist who had cast a covetous eye on the peasants' fields,—meditated confiscation by force. The bumpkins voted for "Yes" to a man, and loudly expressed their regret that Mr. No had not favoured them with a visit, in order that they might have treated him to a little of their minds. In another district it was widely reported that Yes or No were two answers to the inquiry, "Should the taxes be diminished?" and it seems that taxes must have been no more popular in that constituency than elsewhere, for when the urns were opened the delighted Burgomaster found that all the tickets without exception bore "Yes," and even in some cases two "Yeses."

On the evening of the day when the vote was made officially known to him at the palace, and when the Cabinet, the Corps Diplomatique, the Senate, the House of Deputies, and a great variety of officials in gaudy raiment had retired, after bowing to his Serene Highness the Grand Duke, and making their obeisance to her Serene Highness the Grand Duchess; towards night, when the Ducal lamplighters had commenced their avocations, and the Ducal cooks were dishing up the serene dinner, a modest brougham pulled up at one of the private doors of the palace, and a bald-headed personage got out. It was his Excellency the ex-Minister Bubblewitz. Anybody who had seen this distinguished statesman a few weeks before would have been astonished to see the beatific expression that animated his features now. He had grown almost as fat again as when he was in office, which is saying a great deal, for on the day he surrendered his seals he had begun to thin, and in the course of two months had grown so lean as to become an object of compassion to his acquaintance. On getting out of his brougham he made a question to the Ducal usher-in-waiting, which sounded uncommonly like, "Is the coast clear?" To which the usher at once responded, with an almost imperceptible contraction of the left eyelid, "Yes, your Excellency. There is no danger of meeting the Count; he went away ten minutes ago."

The statesman Bubblewitz strode up the grand staircase two steps at a time, for he appeared to be in possession of his best legs as well as his best looks; and on the first landing gave the usher a two-ducat piece, which was a piece of liberality to which the other did not seem accustomed. Instead of going towards the state apartments, Bubblewitz made, without hesitation, for a side-passage, at the end of which was a back stair

and a private door. Arrived at the private door, he knocked, and the next minute was standing in the presence of the Duke and Duchess, who were probably expecting him, for they nodded confidentially, and held out their hands, saying, "We are glad to see you, Herr Bubblewitz."

"Oh, Highness, how can I express my delight at your success!" exclaimed the statesman, exultingly.

"Your loyal sentiments do you honour, Herr Bubblewitz," replied the Duke, with benevolence.

"I am sure Herr Bubblewitz is much more loyal than the new Minister," remarked her Serene Highness, with a pout on her pretty lips. "Herr Bubblewitz always let me come to the Cabinet Councils, and Count von Tost und Wasser never does. Besides, it was Herr Bubblewitz who put the idea of the proclamation into our heads, and discovered all about the ginger-beer bottle."

"Yes, my dear," observed Rodolphus III.; "we are all grateful to Bubblewitz."

"I am sure I always do my best," pleaded that amiable statesman, affected to tears. "I never miss an occasion of turning my little talents to good account for your use, and—and, your Highness, you never heard me utter a word of reproach when—booh-ooh!—when—you turned me out of my place a few months ago." Here the faithful Bubblewitz was so overcome, that the tears coursed each other down his noble cheeks, and he had to be comforted with glasses of wine and kind words.

"There, he mustn't be melancholy," said the Grand Duchess, patting his venerable back, and coaxing him to imbibe a third glass of liquid. "He shall have his seals back again, that he shall. They shall make a place for him in the Tost und Wasser Cabinet, and if ill-natured, unkind Tost und Wasser won't, then they shall turn out Tost und Wasser—*there!*"

"I beg pardon!" interrupted a voice, which suddenly sounded in Bubblewitz's ear like a pistol-shot, and made him spill half his wine over his waistcoat. "I beg pardon!" and his arch-rival, Tost und Wasser, stood in the room.

His Serene Highness Rodolphus III. turned slightly blue, and her Serene Highness the Duchess Iphigenia became red as a blush-rose.

"I beg your Highness's pardon," repeated Count von Tost und Wasser, "but in going away from this room, twenty minutes ago, I forgot something!" and he picked up his portfolio, which was lying on the sofa.

"Shall I help your Excellency to carry it?" cried Bubblewitz, rushing forward obsequiously; and he added, half aloud, with a sigh, "If the portfolio was mine, it's not likely I should ever forget it."

"Patience!" said the Duchess, in a whisper.

Marathon and its Brigands.

THE trip from Athens to Marathon is no joke, especially in summer, and when brigands are known to be sauntering unmolested along Mount Parnes, a night's walk away. Yet when G—— and C——, officials of two great Christian Governments, escaped from Constantinople for a holiday, and stirred me out of my hot quarters at Athens to show them the lions, &c., of course it became necessary to put this excursion in the programme. It was in August of last year, 1869, and we knew that there were brigands at Phylæ, and did not know that they were not nearer. In fact, the people of Athens were so panic-stricken that they would not go into the outskirts of the town in the evening; it was clear to the popular apprehension that we were besieged, and that the *roi des brigands*, whoever he might be for the time, was ruler of all the country round.

So, as our trip was to be in the nature of an invasion of an enemy's country, I decided to make it a surprise, and, with strict injunctions of secrecy on all around, went, at nightfall of the day before we were to make the excursion, to the *Commandant de place* and asked an escort—"not that there was any use in it, but the strangers were anxious," &c. The Commandant stroked his moustache, expressed his sense of the high honour of having been permitted to make my acquaintance, offered me a cigarette, and we talked European politics, the Cretan insurrection, &c.; he assured me, as I rose to take my leave, that an escort of cavalry should be waiting at my door at 5 A.M. the next day. I went thence to the owner of horses and carriages and ordered a carriage for the above hour, and a relay of horses to be sent forward at once to the half-way station. I knew that if, even then, one of the friends of the brigands in town (by force of circumstances I should have said the carriage-owner, if I had been pressed to select one) should send word to his colleagues that four distinguished foreigners, of whom two certainly were ambassadors, were to start for Marathon on the morrow, they would not get the news before morning, and would not dare cross the plain by day, so that we could reach Athens again before they could get upon our road.

I awoke with the grey dawn and heard the hoofs of the troopers' horses clattering on the pavement in front of the house, and, running over to the hotel, found my friends wasting the precious coolness in deliberate breakfast. I inspected the horses, bullied the driver for having brought us the shabbiest carriage in Athens (by way of cutting down in advance his claim for backsheesh, or extra pay on any score), interjected a little Western celerity into the Eastern combination, and we started, picking

up the escort *en route*. The road (that which conducts to Chalcis) is very good for a few miles, and we rattled along until we had passed Hymettus and emerged on the plains which slope towards Eubœa, when we turned sharp off by a bad waggon-track, rather than carriage-road, through the olive-orchards, and then through a pine-forest as solitary as the backwoods of America. No habitation, man, or grazing beast even, was to be seen; no tinkle of goat-bells to be heard. In the midst of this forest, by the side of a brook, seeming at first sight a succession of stagnant pools, bordered by a luxuriant growth of blackberries, oleanders, and rich grass, we found our relay waiting. There was no delay in changing, and about 10 A.M. we emerged from the wood on the marsh-bordered plain of Marathon.

The blue sea now breaks farther out than when the Persian keels fretted it and marked the sand that now lies hundreds of feet inland; and many acres of the marsh, where, doubtless, Persian bones and Persian trophies are bedded to this day, are now solid earth. We drove up to the mound through the maize-fields, and between the strips of vineyard, where the villagers of New Marathon were watching the early grapes; and having climbed the mound, made its circuit, and hunted for fragments of flint instruments, which form one of the items of interest at Marathon, we bought of the patriarch of the adjoining fields—who sat under a shelter of reeds guarding his riches, lest they took to themselves wings—a supply of water-melons, scarcely ripe grapes, and cantaloupes; each trooper confiscating one of the former, and quenching his thirst in the saddle. Then, having listened to the guide's tale of the battle, oft told, and ever growing in wondrous inequalities of heroism and butchery; and looked where he told us (and Murray, ever-to-be-consulted, confirmed,) that the Greeks held their position and the Persians landed: having, in short, "done" the place after the manner of the guidebook-led tourist, we drove back to the edge of the forest for shelter from the intense sun while we lunched.

I think that "timeo Danaos" must be one of the things birched into us at school, for, with an immense liking for the race, I have an instinctive distrust of the preternatural shrewdness of the true Achaian, and our driver was of the genuine type, and had an uncanny way of looking across the bridge of his nose towards the mountains, which made me uneasy.

However, we lunched, drank copiously of good wine of Phalerum, while the driver pottered about his carriage and horses, to such good purpose that, when finally we started on the home road, we had not gone half a mile before the carriage came to a standstill, out of order. One of the wheels refused to revolve. Nothing was broken, so far as could be seen; but no efforts of all the persons concerned could make the wheel turn, or get it off its axle. The ever-to-be-suspected citizen of Athens begged us, with much serenity, to compose and assure ourselves, and be comfortable while he sent to Athens for another carriage. My misgivings coming to a head very rapidly, I asked him when the carriage would arrive; and he

replied, in the happiest and most confident tone, that he *hoped* that it would get there by nightfall. "Very well," said I, "we will go and send it." Unhitching the horses, and dismounting two of the troopers, we rode back to the relay post at the little bridge, where the recently murdered Englishmen were captured, and there halted to wait for one of the dismounted men, who had been charged with a photographic camera, and had not kept up with us. Meanwhile, one of the soldiers rode on to the next hamlet to see if some kind of trap could not be obtained; for, between foot-weariness and saddle-soreness, we were all desirous to change our method of locomotion. Our escort was thus diminished to two—the corporal and one private. The place was a capital one for an ambush, as the capturers of Lord Muncaster's party found it, and I looked into the thick trees growing each side of the brook on the bank overlooking it, and in the bed of it above us, with a certain nervousness, which increased when, after half-an-hour's waiting, the remaining trooper was sent back to look for the missing camera and its bearer.

There was nothing for it, however, but to wait till the escort reassembled; and we lit our cigarettes and lay down under the pine-trees. A circumstance that assured me somewhat was, that I found the troopers' carbines all unloaded (they were old-fashioned flint-lock smooth-bores), from which I saw that they at least anticipated no danger. The corporal was a jolly, good-humoured veteran, whose air was that of a man ready for any emergency or danger. I asked him if he thought there was any ground for fear that, if we were obliged to wait long there, we might be carried off by some of the country-people, brigands *pro tempore*? He replied with the significant Greek negative, a silent pointing upward of the nose, accompanied by a slight arching of the brows, and, after another puff or two at his cigarette, said: "No; we know all the brigands, and generally know where they are. They could not stay here twenty-four hours without our knowing it, and we know that there have been none on this side of Pentelicus for months. The common people here," he added, "are very honest and quiet, but very poor."

"Perhaps," ejaculated M—, "the one because the other—put whichever you please as cause or effect in this country."

"I was a brigand myself once," said the corporal, after the pause in the conversation had lasted a few minutes; whereupon we all looked at him anew, and with a little more animation; and he added, as if in partial disclaimer, "but it was only for a few months."

"But how did it happen?" I asked; for though I knew that there had been brigands in the Cabinet in Greece, I did not suppose that the post of corporal in the mounted gendarmerie was a temptation to a gay rover who had felt the delight of outlawry.

"It was in this way," replied he. "I used to live in Acarnania, and, in one of the elections, there was a gentleman who had great influence in two or three of the villages, and who came from Athens to help the other side; and, as we knew that if these villages went against us we should

lose the election, it was necessary to get rid of him. The chiefs of our party tried to draw him over to us ; but, as he would not come, we had to get up a quarrel in the street, and he was killed. I was one of those who made the fight. I did not strike a blow, but ran with the others to the mountains to wait till it all could be made right again. But, in spite of everything, the other side got the election and so we could not go back. If our men had been elected we should have been pardoned. So we went up to the Phthiotide and joined a band there, three of us ; I stayed two years before I had a chance of getting back, and that was in the beginning of the Cretan insurrection, when many of the bands went over to fight with the Turks. When I did get back they made me corporal, as you see me ; and, when there is any necessity to hunt the brigands, I generally go with the expedition, for I know all the roads. But this Government don't trouble them much. You see, General Soutzo, the Minister of War, has got an estate up in the brigands' country, and he knows very well that if he troubles them too much it will be plundered ; and then it's no use running after them, for the moment an expedition starts they all go to the frontier, and are ready to cross over and get Turkish protection ; and there are always some Turkish subjects in the bands, who make it all right with the guards."

"Did you ever make any prizes while you were in the band ?" I asked.

"No great gentlemen ; only a few Wallachian and Bulgarian merchants. The bands don't like to trouble Franks, unless it is a lord or some very rich man who can pay a big ransom, for the affair makes so much more trouble when it is a Frank, and they get pursued and have to leave their families for a long time : and it don't do," he ejaculated, with a shrug.

"But have they families with them ?" I asked.

"Perhaps," suggested C——, "they have as many as they have hiding-places."

The corporal's nose went up in the air with a quiet expression of his evident feeling that we did not in the least understand the respectability of the kleptic calling, as he replied, "No ; they always stay near their families, except when the expeditions are out, and get their supplies from their relations. You must know that when Comoundouros was First Minister, there were some bands in the Morea, and the nomarch of Argos, the same who caught Kitzos, sent all the families of the brigands over to the islands, and they had to come in and surrender in a few weeks ; all but one band near Patras, and they would have come too, if Bulgaria had not come in First Minister, and sent the nomarch away, because they said he violated the Constitution. That is what makes the country so poor, this changing the Ministers all the time ; and the King, he's of no use, only costs thirty million drachmas a year ;" and the politician born shrugged his shoulders with an expression of contempt for such a state of things. He proceeded, however, after a moment :—"The chiefs never allow the members of their bands to marry or steal women if they

are already married, because it always makes trouble, and the women betray the bands to punish them. One of our band one day stole a very pretty girl from a village near Lamia ; and when the chief ordered him to take her back, and he refused and threatened to leave the band, the chief shot him dead, and sent the girl home. Her father paid us well by giving information of a rich Bulgarian wool-merchant, who was buying wool in the mountains near Lamia, and we carried him off, and got twenty thousand drachmas ransom. That was the best capture we made while I was in the band. We tried to catch an English lord once who was going over to the Eubœa ; but some of the people told Mr. Noel, an English gentleman who lives at Achmet Aga, and he sent the lord warning."

"How did you know he was a lord ?" I asked.

"Oh, one of the band had a cousin who was a waiter in the hotel where the lord lived, and he sent us word that he was coming, and that he had so much money that he did not know how to spend it ; for he bought all kinds of antiquities for whatever price people asked him, and gave backsheesh like a fool. If we had caught him we should have made him pay ten thousand pounds ransom, and then we should have gone over the frontier and bought property in Epirus, and become Turkish subjects. Ten thousand pounds is a good deal of money," he appended, by way of reflection.

Here he got up and walked across the bridge to the brink of the opposite bank, and listened if he could catch any sound of the horse of the trooper sent after the missing footman. Nothing. What could the matter be ? Had they both been gobbed up by the brigands ? Their fire-arms, I knew, were not loaded, and they could not even fire a shot of warning for us. There was, however, nothing to do but wait ; and wait we did. The troopers' saddles were very bad ; one of the party was no horseman, and was already both footsore and saddle-sore, for we had come twelve miles since the break-down ; another was a cripple,—and to get back to Athens afoot was, therefore, to two of us impossible. Then we had only three available horses : the corporal being too portly and equestrian to get home afoot, two of the gendarmes being away with their horses, and the keeper of the relay having started for Athens on one of his spare beasts to hurry up the other carriage. Of the remaining three, none had saddles ; and the two which had brought us from Marathon were thoroughly jaded. We had ten or twelve miles still to go, and the prospect was not a pleasant one.

Presently the trooper who had been sent back came clattering along with the news that the missing comrade was not to be found. He had ridden back to the carriage, and found no trace of him on the road. The other, sent after a vehicle, had not returned, and it was now nearly mid-afternoon. We all grew nervous and irritable, and I confidently expected to see the dirty fustanella appear in the bushes around. C—— began, in Stamboul Greek, with strong English accent, to abuse the Government and Greece in general, to which the corporal replied imperturbably, for

the Greeks are too much in the habit of hearing their State berated to think much about it ; and it sometimes occurs to me that, as they do really, in general, receive more abuse than they deserve, it may have had the effect of diminishing the self-respect which man or nation must possess, to win the respect of others. So the corporal re-echoed the epithets levelled at the Ministers, and abused the King, who, he said, might better matters if he were not so given up to his favourites. It is hard quarrelling with a man who takes your side in the quarrel, and we had to stop berating the government, as the corporal beat us out and out in virulence.

" But tell me, Stavros," said I, at length, " what would you do if you were Minister of War to put down brigandage ? "

" Do ! " replied he, the feather of imagination tickling his importance so that he became really ministerial in dignity. " I would very soon stop it. I would make the villages pay all the ransoms which were taken in their territory. I would do as the nomarch of Argos did, and send the families of all the brigands out to live in the islands, and I would have all brigands shot as soon as taken, instead of being sent, as they are now, to the Palamidi, to wait for a new election, and then be pardoned to go into the provinces to make influence. But the Turkish Government must work with ours, or there cannot be an end to it. Why, not a year ago, when we were going to fight the Turks about the *Enosis*, and Hobart Pacha went to Syra to take her, I was with an expedition to look at the boundary near Arta, and the brigands took two of our officers who slept in a village without sentinels, and carried them over the frontiers, and kept them in the Turkish guard-house for ransom, and the Turkish captain had part of the ransom. You might as well attempt to shut all the fish into Piraeus harbour as to try to shut the brigands off from the boundary. If all the lazy regulars who live in the barracks of Athens, and do nothing but set guard at the palace and march about town, were put on the boundary, they wouldn't keep a man from passing when he liked. But they might watch the villagers, to keep the brigands from coming down to get bread or powder, or from capturing any one, and in time they would be starved out. But they must send the families away—that will stop them quicker than anything else."

" But," I said, " that is illegal—it's against the Constitution."

" Bah ! " said the indignant soldier, " we hear of the Constitution when it serves the Ministers—never when it protects the people. The Constitution is like the middle of a fast*—you may do what you like with it. There are sixty brigands in chains now in the Palamidi, and I'll lay a wager that forty will be pardoned in a year, and yet the Constitution does not permit the pardoning of a brigand without the Chambers. I know fellows who have been released two or three times. It is all very

* The practice of many in Greece is to keep only the first and last weeks of the long fasts. Strict devotees keep the whole, 146 days of each year.

well to talk of constitutions and laws ; but I think that Ministers make them for their own good, and keep them when they like. In my opinion the law that does the work is the law we want, and if I was Minister I would make law enough to do what I wanted. I know a butcher in Athens who has a brother a brigand in a band near Galaxidi, and he keeps the band informed of all people going there ; and I suppose if we put him in prison, as he deserves, there would be a great talk about the Constitution ; but, if I had my way, I would lock him up in the Palamidi, and his lawyers with him. Your Constitutions may be all very well in other countries, but——” and he finished by a thumb over his shoulder. “ Constitution ! ” he ejaculated again, after a little, with a contemptuous shrug, as though his ideas had been rumbling away in some inner cavern, and had come out in an echo.

It grew late when the man sent in search of a vehicle returned, saying that nothing was to be found. The missing man must be abandoned, and we must push on as we could, hoping, on the high road, to fall in with some means of transport. The two gendarmes gave up their horses cheerfully in view of backsheesh, the two best of the carriage-horses bore the other two of us, and without other mishaps we journeyed along as far as the road, when at a half-fortified metochi, we found a butcher’s cart, which, filled with straw and packed densely with the four of us, in addition to the guide and driver, served to bring us with much pain to Athens, where we arrived about 10 P.M. The missing gendarme was waiting at the metochi.

The next day, about sunset, I happened to meet the carriage returning, and had the curiosity to ask what was the matter.

“ Only a nail, which had got between the axle and wheel, and would not let it turn.”

“ Ah ! ” I said, “ how did the nail get there ? ”
The driver shrugged his shoulders with a bland smile, which might be understood to mean anything you pleased. I took it to mean that he knew when and why the nail got in ; and, had I been Stavros’ model Minister, I should certainly have sent him to the Palamidi forthwith.

A Clever Forgery.

THE attention which has of late been called to literary forgeries induces us to lay before our readers some particulars of a case of imposture which, as regards the eminence of the author whose work was imitated ; the skill of the imitator ; the internal character of the forged document ; the success of the fraud ; the difficulty of discovery ; and the mystery which even now hangs over the transaction, yields in interest to no recorded event of the kind. Moreover, the history is in a great measure new to this country. The forgery was committed in Germany eighty years ago, and it is above thirty years since it was detected and publicly exposed ; but the work in question, which is very popular and has a large sale, is almost universally believed, here, to be the genuine production of the author whose name it bears.

The history applies, not to a literary, but to a musical document, which passes for one of the greatest works of one of the greatest composers of modern days.* The points of interest are, however, very analogous to those arising in cases of literary forgery.

In the latter part of the last century there resided, some twenty or thirty miles south of Vienna, a large landed proprietor named Count Wallsegg. At that time Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven were all busy in the Austrian capital ; music was much cultivated, and it was no uncommon thing for a man of elevated rank to be also a learned and skilful musician. Count Wallsegg aimed at obtaining this character ; he patronized music and musicians extensively, retained a band of his own, and produced for their performance creditable music from his own hand. In 1791 his Countess died, and he took the opportunity of combining his respect for her with the gratification of his ruling passion, by producing a new Requiem, to be performed in her memory. It was a pretentious composition for voices and instruments ; the score in the Count's autograph is still in existence, and bears the following title :—

REQUIEM
COMPOSTO DAL
CONTE WALLSEGG.

It was put in rehearsal and studied carefully ; musicians were brought from Vienna to augment the orchestra, and at length, in 1792, it was

* The particulars here given are chiefly taken from a work published in Leipsic, in 1859, "*W. A. Mozart, von OTTO JAHN.*" The details more especially interesting to musicians may be found in a series of articles communicated to the *Musical Times* in 1869, by W. Pole, F.R.S., Mus. Doc., Oxon.

publicly performed. It was one of the finest works ever heard in that part of the country ; it was repeated several times, and it procured the Count great fame.

About that time another death of an eminent person occurred in Vienna. The great Mozart, whose wonderful genius and talent as a composer were destined to place him, for all future time, at the summit of the musical art, departed this life, in the fulness of his powers, on the 5th December, 1791. His latest works had procured that recognition of his merits which had been denied to him in his early years, and some months after his death great interest was excited by the public performance of what was stated to be his last composition, described as

MISSA PRO DEFUNCTIS
(REQUIEM)
IN MUSIK GESETZT
VON
W. A. MOZART.

The hall was densely crowded, and the work was received with the greatest enthusiasm. It was quickly repeated in Leipsic and in other places ; manuscript copies were bought at large prices by the sovereigns of Europe ; and one of the most eminent musicians of the time wrote out a transcript, note for note, with his own hand, inscribing on the title-page, in letters an inch high, the words *Opus sumnum civi summi!*

Now, strange to say, the Requiem "composto" by Count Wallsegg, and the Requiem "in Musik gesetzt" by W. A. Mozart, were one and the same composition. And, stranger still, this Requiem was not composed by Count Wallsegg, for he was incapable of conceiving a bar of such music ; nor was it written by Mozart, for it was not in existence at the time he died ! The original score was a clever forgery of Mozart's handwriting, executed after his death, at the instance of his widow, by a young man whose name would never have come down to posterity had it not been for his connection with this transaction.

The circumstances under which this double imposture came about were as follows. The musical compositions which procured the Count Wallsegg so much credit, though given out by him as his own, were only so in the sense that a lady's hair, under the present fashion of coiffure, is her own ; namely, because he *bought* them. It was his custom, when he wanted to produce a song, a quartett, or a symphony, to order it from some composer, whom he paid liberally, under the condition that he should be allowed to take the credit of the composition, the real authorship being strictly concealed. He did not himself appear in these transactions, but carried them on through secret agents, so that the authors themselves often did not know what became of their works. The Count did not publish his music ; he appears to have been content with the fame derived from its performance under his direction ; and though

some of his musicians strongly suspected that the style was above his capability, it was not their interest to expose him.

When the idea of performing a Requiem for his Countess occurred to him, he fixed on Mozart as the person to write it. It is said he had already had some transactions with this composer, but whether this was so or not, he knew well, not only that he was an able musician, but also that his circumstances were such as would incline him to fall in with the proposal. Accordingly a messenger was sent to Mozart in Vienna, to ask him if he would undertake the commission, on the condition of secrecy, and if so, what remuneration he would expect. He assented, naming a sum which the Count willingly paid in advance, promising to increase it considerably when the score was delivered to him.

Mozart's attention was at first called off by other pressing engagements; but on receiving, sometime afterwards, a reminder from the Count, he set to the work. He was then falling ill, and had a presentiment of his approaching decease, but he honourably endeavoured to perform his engagement. He commenced the composition, which was taken from him by his physicians, and again resumed; but before he had proceeded far with it, he was called "to that place where only his harmony could be excelled."

The widow, who was left in bad circumstances, felt greatly perplexed about the Requiem. She feared that if the person who had commissioned it came to know it was unfinished, he would demand the return of his money; and she therefore began to consider whether it would not be possible to evade such a liability. She had many friends among the composers of Vienna, and she hit upon the idea of asking some of them to complete the work, in such a manner that the whole might be passed off as her husband's; a measure by which she might not only retain the sum already received, but secure that which was to come. Several musicians were applied to in strict confidence, and at last a suitable person was found in a young man named Franz Xavier Süssmayer, a pupil of Mozart's, who had been much with him during the latter part of his life. He was a clever musician, and wrote some works that excited attention at the time; but he lived a dissipated life, and died before he could establish any enduring character as a composer.

Mozart had finished only one movement of the Requiem out of thirteen; he had made some progress with several others, but the last four or five he had not even begun. Süssmayer undertook to finish the incomplete portions, and to fill up those wanting by entirely new compositions of his own.

But he undertook more than this. The widow, though she did not know who the person was for whom the Requiem was intended, seems to have had a shrewd notion that some trouble might be caused by the work not being in the handwriting of her husband, which was peculiar and well known. To imitate this was almost as difficult a task as to fill up the wanting music; indeed, many persons who might have attempted the

latter would have been incapable of the former. Süssmayer, however, undertook both duties, and performed them both with equal skill and success. He took the first movement already existing in Mozart's hand, and having completed and composed the remainder, he copied the latter in such an exact imitation of Mozart's writing that, when bound up with the real autograph, no difference could be traced between them.

The score thus made up was then sent to the Count Wallsegg, who, doubtless recognizing the writing, suspected nothing, but re-copied the whole and gave it out for his own, secure in the belief that his secret would be preserved by the payment of his stipulated and handsome honorarium.

But in this belief he had reckoned without his host, or rather without his hostess; for the cunning widow, before parting with Süssmayer's score, had made a copy for herself, and this she determined to use, with very little scruple, for her own advantage.

A curious anecdote is related of a violin-maker, so skilful in his trade, that he could imitate an old violin to perfection. One day a fiddler, more eminent than honest, brought him a fine Cremona, and said, with a sly twinkle in his eye, "Mr.— I want you to make me an exact copy of this Amati." The maker, who knew to whom the fiddle belonged and guessed the object, promised to have it ready in two months. At the end of the time the player came, paid the money and received the two violins; but when he got home, and examined them closely, he found they were *both* counterfeits, the clever imitator having kept the true Amati for himself.

So Madame Mozart was not content with a single imposture, she resolved not only to deceive Count Wallsegg, but to deceive the world also. She cared nothing for her husband's solemn pledge of secrecy, but determined at once to perform the Requiem under Mozart's name, and thus it became known to the public, as already described. No doubt the Count winced when he heard of the Vienna performance, but he was not in a position to complain, and though he remonstrated privately, at a later time, he did not interfere with the general circulation of the work. In 1800 the score was engraved for publication by a Leipsic firm, and in consequence of some reports that had reached them as to Süssmayer's connection with the Requiem, they applied to him for explanation. He admitted, in answer, that the work was partly his own composition; but though the firm published his letter, they discredited his claim, believing him incapable of composing music of so high a character; and for this reason they described the work as entirely Mozart's, without making any further allusion to Süssmayer.

Five-and-twenty years afterwards the question was again raised. An eminent critic named Gottfried Weber attacked the Requiem on internal grounds. He endeavoured to prove that the work could not be Mozart's, as it abounded with faults which it was impossible such a writer could commit. He attributed the composition mainly to Süssmayer, and cited the published letter from this young man as corroborative of the judgment

he had formed from the music itself. Weber's article stirred up a violent controversy, which lasted for two or three years, and in which many leading musicians took part; but owing to the silence of Madame Mozart, for obvious reasons, and to the reticence of her friends out of consideration for her, this left the question only where it was before. The composition had been warmly defended, and the general opinion was still adhered to, in spite of Weber's criticisms, that the work was really genuine.

In 1839 the true state of the matter was discovered, and the fraud detected, by the production of the original manuscript score, furnished in the first instance to Count Wallsegg. He had fortunately preserved it secretly in his library, and some years after his death it was discovered and identified, and was purchased by Count Moritz von Dietrichstein, for the Imperial Library at Vienna. The greatest interest was excited in the musical world by the acquisition, and an investigation of the evidence it afforded as to the authorship was at once set on foot. The proceedings on this inquiry form one of the strangest portions of the history; and we extract the following account of them from an official narrative published shortly afterwards by the keeper of the library.*

An inspection of the score gave at once the impression to every one who was acquainted with Mozart's writing, that it was entirely, from the first to the last leaf, written by his hand; from which it followed that he had really finished the work before his death, and that every report circulated, either in print or by tradition to the contrary, must be an error. This impression was confirmed by various other considerations, among which the elevated character of the whole of the music, and the reputation which, after all the attacks of Weber, and the testing of half a century, it had maintained, were important elements.

But it was felt that great caution ought to be exercised in admitting this opinion. It was true that manuscripts often had been, and still from time to time were discovered, which had been considered as lost, or the existence of which had never been suspected; but still, as evidence had been produced, at a former time, from good authority, tending to throw doubt on Mozart's alleged completion of the Requiem, it was decided that the apparent resemblance of the writing ought not to be trusted; but that, as a duty to the musical world, the manuscript ought to undergo the most searching examination and the severest tests that it was possible to apply.

The first test was by comparing the newly-found score with the original unfinished portions of the same work, which had undeniably proceeded from Mozart's hand. It must be explained that it was the widow's policy, in furtherance of her imposture, carefully to keep these out of sight. She would have been unscrupulous enough to destroy them, but her cupidity prevented this, as she hoped to make money by them.

* *Ueber die original Partitur des Requiem von W. A. Mozart.* Von I. F. EDLEN
VON MOSEL. Wien, 1839.

After some ineffectual attempts to dispose of them, under conditions of secrecy, to a publisher at Frankfort, she sold them piecemeal, in such a way as to render difficult their subsequent discovery. A good providence, however, foiled her intention, as they fortunately, after many vicissitudes, fell into the hands of persons who perceived their value, and placed them for safety in the Imperial Library.

The existence of these unquestionably genuine documents was not inconsistent with the possibility that Mozart, treating them as mere sketches, might have subsequently made a fair finished copy; but at the same time they served as an excellent test for the comparison of the newly-found manuscript, inasmuch as the whole of the contents of the former were—notes, signs, and words—literally transcribed into the latter. The comparison was made with great care, and the resemblance of the handwriting was found perfect in nearly all particulars.

But this comparison was not thought sufficient, and a wider investigation was set on foot. The authorities procured other undoubted manuscripts by Mozart, upwards of eighty in number, of all periods of his life, including some of his latest, corresponding to the date of the Requiem; and armed with these, a number of the most eminent musicians, and of those best acquainted with Mozart's writings, were invited to form a committee for the purpose of examining the new score and of pronouncing a judgment upon it.

The committee renewed, with the more copious materials, the careful comparison previously made; and the result was that the majority declared the new score to be positively in Mozart's handwriting, from its exact correspondence with his acknowledged manuscripts in all important parts, not only in the notes and the text, but also in the minor signs, such as the figuring added to the bass part, and so on. A comparison was also made with some autographs of Süssmayer's, and these were so essentially different as hardly to present the most distant likeness, many of the signs in them being of a totally different character.

The minority of the committee, while they admitted that the reasons in favour of the genuineness far outweighed any arguments that could be brought on the other side, stated, on being repeatedly pressed to do so, the following facts which they believed deserved further consideration:—

In the first place, the date 1792 was written under Mozart's name, whereas it was known that he died in the preceding year.

Secondly, some ungrammatical progressions were pointed out in a portion of the music, which it was not thought possible Mozart could have written.

Thirdly, a difference was found in the form of the signs for the naturals, which were among the most characteristic marks of Mozart's hand. In his acknowledged compositions they were uniformly formed with a closed square, narrower above than below, while in the Wallsegg score they were open squares, more like those of Süssmayer.

Fourthly, other differences were found in the capital letters B, P, Q, R, and T, which were not always like Mozart's usual forms.

Attention was also called to the fact that the differences mentioned under the third and fourth heads were only found in the second and following movements; in the first movement Mozart's usual forms were in all respects adhered to.

It was further remarked that the paging of the book was not consecutive, and that there was no intelligible reason why Mozart should have made a fresh copy, instead of filling in and completing the one he had already begun.

These remarks, which showed with what extraordinary care and conscientiousness the examination was made, were answered by the other side at considerable length and with much ingenuity.

In regard to the error in the date, it was argued that Mozart, working at the composition so late in the year, might well have assumed that it could not be completed till the beginning of the year after, and therefore might have purposely post-dated it. Or it might be merely a mistake, for, singularly enough, among the undoubted manuscripts used for comparison was a rondo for the Waldhorn, dated, in Mozart's hand, *Venerdì Santo il 6 Aprile, 1792*; and as Good Friday happened to fall on April 6, 1791, the slip of the pen was evident, and might easily have been reproduced in the Requiem. Either of these explanations would be, it was urged, infinitely more reasonable than to suppose that anybody planning a deliberate forgery should commit such an absurdity as to append to the forged document a date subsequent to the professed author's death.

In regard to the ungrammatical progressions, it was pointed out that their effect was hidden by the disposition of the parts, and that they might easily have escaped the composer's attention, or might even have been admitted by him exceptionally, precedents for such passages being abundantly found in the works of Handel.

As to the form of the naturals, while it was admitted that the closed square was the most usual and characteristic form in Mozart's manuscripts, yet examples were shown where he had used the open form; and, by an odd coincidence, this form, exactly similar to that in the Wallsegg score, was exclusively found in the Waldhorn rondo before mentioned.

The answer as to the shape of the capital letters was not so forcible; but it was still found that the letter B existed in the test manuscripts in several shapes, some of which resembled those in the Requiem, and the useful Waldhorn composition again came in aid, as the R in the word "Rondo" of the title was of the exact Requiem form. The connection of this piece with the Requiem was one of the most curious things in the history, as it not only contained the exceptional similarities above noted, but it was composed for a person of the same name (Leutgeb) as the mysterious messenger sent by the Count to communicate with Mozart about the composition. The exact shapes of the other letters could not be positively identified in any of the Mozart manuscripts; but as a set-off against this, it was pointed out that the word *finis* on the last page of the

Requiem was as exact a facsimile of one undoubtedly written by Mozart in November, 1791, as if they had been both impressions from the same type. It was also remarked that certain little penmarks on the paper, having no obvious reference to the music, but probably done while the writer was thinking, were visible in the Requiem, precisely as they were in many of Mozart's acknowledged compositions.

In regard to the irregularity of the paging, and the alleged improbability of Mozart's having re-written the work instead of having filled up the former sketches, the testimony of the widow at a former time was brought to prove that he was irregular and careless in the arrangement of his papers, and that when a sketch was lost, he would often ré-write it exactly as before (his memory being unfailing in this respect) rather than take the trouble to hunt for the missing paper.

There yet remained Süssmayer's declaration to be got over, and also some evidence corroborative of it, from the widow and others, which had turned up during the Weber controversy. Süssmayer's claims were simply set down as presumptuous and incredible; his capability of writing the music was denied, and as one or two erroneous statements had been detected in his letter, the truth of the whole was impugned. As to the corroborative evidence, it was attempted to explain this away by observing that the widow herself had given contradictory accounts at different times, and that the other witnesses had but incomplete personal knowledge of the facts they deposed to.

These answers were considered so conclusive that little or no doubt remained as to the genuineness of the newly found score, when an accident re-opened the inquiry. The comparison of Süssmayer's writing had been made with two hastily written specimens, which, after much seeking, were all that could be procured; but it happened that after the end of the before-mentioned investigation a certain Baron von Lannoy offered, for inspection, two autographs of pieces from an opera written by Süssmayer in 1793, two years after Mozart's death.

When these manuscripts were produced, the first glimpse of them excited the greatest amazement. The specimens of Süssmayer's music previously inspected had presented a very marked difference from Mozart's handwriting; but these, to everybody's astonishment, resembled it so closely, that only the positive evidence as to their history could convince the examiners that they were not in Mozart's hand. On a closer examination, the similarity of the writing to Mozart's was found almost incredible; and what was more to the purpose, when the Wallsegg score was compared with them, the resemblance of the second and following numbers to the new Süssmayer autographs was more absolute still, inasmuch as the latter contained all the peculiarities which had attracted attention in the former. The shapes of the letters P, Q, and T, for example, which could nowhere be found in Mozart's writing, prevailed exclusively in the later Süssmayer examples. The other objections urged by the minority now acquired greater weight, and the longer and

the more carefully the comparison was made, the more confusing it became, particularly as in the Requiem score some signs were still found which corresponded better with Mozart's autograph than with any of Süssmayer's.

In this state of things only one means remained of arriving at the truth, namely to apply to the yet living widow of the great master, and to ask her whether, as far as she knew, Mozart had finished, or had left unfinished, his last composition. It was true that she had already, on several occasions, stated that the latter was the case, but at former periods she had also asserted the contrary; and in the difficulty raised by the recent discoveries it was felt that a positive decision, from the best possible source, was highly to be desired.

The widow answered promptly; she said—

" If the score is complete, it is not by Mozart, for he did not finish it. It is then desirable to look at what Süssmayer has written, for in my judgment no man is able to imitate another person's writing so exactly that it cannot be discovered. Thus much upon this; and now I declare that no other than Süssmayer finished the Requiem, which was not so difficult, since, as is known, the chief parts were all laid out, and Süssmayer could not err."

This answer was decisive. Guided by the new light thrown on the question, a further examination of the score showed the differences between the writing of the first movement, which was really Mozart's, and of the subsequent portions, in the now identified hand of Süssmayer. Some members of the committee were still inclined fondly to cling to the idea that the whole was genuine; but this view could not long be persevered in, in the face of the strong evidence to the contrary, and the forgery became fully established, as the only reasonable conclusion that could be drawn from the facts of the case.

It is difficult to divine what motive Süssmayer could have had for continuing to feign Mozart's writing for some years after his death;—it may have been for mere bravado, in the exultation of his first success, or he may have had the intention of passing off some of his writings as Mozart's;—but it is highly probable that, had these later imitations not been found, the truth as to the authorship of the Requiem would not have been discovered.

In considering this remarkable history, although, of course, Süssmayer's conduct is indefensible in a moral point of view, we cannot but admire the skill shown by him in the transaction, as regards both the imitation of the handwriting and the musical composition.

The calligraphy of the notes and signs used in music is as peculiar to the individual as ordinary current hand, and persons accustomed to see the manuscript of a composer can identify his writing easily. The imitation of a musical manuscript is as difficult as that of a text autograph. Some rare cases have been known. Joachim, for example, the eminent violinist, amused himself, when a boy, by copying with singular

dexterity the notation of Mendelssohn, whom he held in great veneration ; and one of the Bach family had a wife who wrote her husband's compositions in a hand mistaken for his own. Süssmayer's must have been a remarkably accurate imitation to stand such severe comparisons by such acute judges ; and yet it must have been quickly done, and without any previous practice ; for the fabricated score must have been produced in a very short time, to satisfy the demand of the Count, who, when he heard of Mozart's death, must have naturally called for the immediate delivery of the work he had ordered and partly paid for.

The musical skill shown by Süssmayer in the large share he contributed to the composition is still more extraordinary and admirable. It is not our business here to go into musical details ; but we may state generally what his work consisted of. It has been already mentioned that only one movement—the first—had been *finished* by Mozart. In several of the following he had written the vocal parts, and had here and there given indications as to the nature of the instrumental accompaniments. These Süssmayer had to complete, and the insertion of the wanting parts, in a style to harmonize with that of such a master, required no mean attainments.

In one movement, the *Lacrymosa*, Mozart had only sketched out the first few bars, and Süssmayer had to carry on the idea, which he did in so masterly a manner that its very possibility has been denied. An eminent English critic says,—

It seems to me utterly impossible that any man can have entered into another's incomplete thought, and carried it on in unbroken unity of phrasing and feeling, as Süssmayer pretends to have done in this instance. As well might it be assumed that any stanza of poetry had been finished by another imagination than his who conceived the first line,—that any sentence of an argument could be completed by another's power of thought.

Whether the writer of this passage had in his mind the well-known

SIC VOS NON VOCABIS !

anecdote, we do not know ; but assuredly the thing which he pronounces impossible was done. The work of Mozart and the work of Süssmayer lie side by side in the Library at Vienna, and tell their own story.

But Süssmayer's share in the Requiem went much farther than the mere filling in of instrumental parts, or the completion of passages already begun. Several movements towards the end Mozart had not written a note of ; Süssmayer claimed them in his letter as entirely his own composition, and there is not a scrap of evidence to disprove his assertion, except the internal character of the music, which, as in the case above cited, the most eminent critics deny that it was in the power of any one to compose except the great master himself. Even Gottfried Weber, who impugned the authenticity of the work generally, admitted that "there were flowers in these parts which never grew in Süssmayer's garden." And Marx, another great German writer, said, after quoting passages from the Agnus Dei, "Well, if these are not by

Mozart, then he is a Mozart who wrote them." And yet, if there is any truth in evidence, it is incontestable that Mozart did *not* write these passages, and that Süssmayer *did* write them. The only way out of the difficulty lies in the possibility that Süssmayer, having been much with Mozart during his last illness, may either have obtained sketches for the later portions of the work, or may have heard them played by Mozart, and so may have remembered them sufficiently to write them down. But in any case the musical ability shown in his part throughout the work is of the highest order; and makes us regret that we do not know more of him.

We have been the more desirous to lay this extraordinary history before the public, because in this country, where the facts are not generally known, the belief is still held, even in high musical quarters, that the Requiem is entirely Mozart's composition. A preface to one of the popular editions of the work declares this positively, and whenever it is performed by the Sacred Harmonic Society, the notice given in the Book of Words repeats the assertion. This opinion, however, is clearly at variance with the truth, and it is a pity it should be still persevered in. We must be content to accept the conclusion that, although much of the music is essentially Mozart's, yet the completion of the work, and the composition of several important portions, are due to another hand.

King Laurin's Rose-Garden.

PASS out of the busy arcaded streets of Botzen—that bustling border-town, where the trellised vine still recalls Italy, though the crook-backed, bare-kneed figures which stride springily along in their short jackets, scarlet vests, and feather-decked hats, are unmistakably Tyrolese ; and where German and Italian, with all the various dialects of Romance or Teutonic stock which still linger in the neighbouring valleys, mingle in the fruit-market to form one discordant and unintelligible Babel—pass into the quiet open space before the church, whose Lombard griffins beneath a high-pitched roof of many-coloured tiles are no less significant of a meeting point of races : thence, if you look eastward, where the green rounded hills of the foreground recede for a space, you will see a serried array of pale spires fringing the distant horizon. If, as is probable, you have approached Botzen by the great highway of the Brenner, their forms will be quite new to you. Something they may remind you of the aiguilles of Chamouni ; but those are a few grand forms of simple majesty : here the whole mountain ridge is splintered into a clustering wilderness of rocky shafts, endless in their fantastic variety of outline, and some of them comparable for their slender delicacy only to the spears and mimic aiguilles which the sun fashions in the ice-fall of the glacier. Their colour is as unique as their form. The setting sun will light them up with a warm and ruddy glow, but when this has faded away they stand out like a rank of ghostly sentinels against the evening sky, glimmering with pale and greenish hues. These mountains are the peaks of the Rosengarten.

Whence comes their romantic name ? This is likely to be one of the traveller's first questions. Can it have been suggested by the colour of their rocks ? To those who have only seen them from a distance nothing would seem more improbable. Yet if you penetrate into their recesses you will find the pale monotony of their walls brighten into unexpected contrasts of colour, where soft grey is relieved by patches of delicate rosy pink. Or does the name, as some have fancied, come from the beds of rhododendron which blossom at their feet ? Both these hypotheses are, however, rather unsatisfactory and far-fetched, and the real explanation of the name is probably to be found in legend.

Mediaeval literature has much to say about rose-gardens. In its widest sense the word signified any open and pleasant space, such as might be found before the walls of many a German town, where kings might meet their nobles in assembled council, or where fair dames might distribute garlands to contending knights or minstrels. Such a place is

doubtless meant when an old chronicle tells us how Eric, the Danish King, “*in campo spacio et plano, hortus Rosarum dicto, prope Rostock maximam et multum solemnem curiam tenuit;*” and it was in this sense that Mainz, Mannheim, Gernsheim, and Strassburg all boasted of their rose-gardens. In a more special and restricted signification the name was applied to a fenced and jealously-guarded pleasure-ground, reserved for the exclusive enjoyment of the owner and his most privileged friends, so that they might take their pleasure within its bounds secure and unmolested, free from every prying eye and intruding footfall. It may easily be conceived that a trespass on such a garden was considered by its owner the deadliest and most inexpiable of insults. It was, perhaps, within such a garden as this that the twelve old poets were depicted as walking, in the picture which used to be exhibited at the annual singers' festival at Nuremberg.

But of all these gardens, by far the most renowned in legend was Krimhild's Rose-garden at Worms. The poem in which it is celebrated is later than the *Nibelungen Lied*, the author of which knows nothing of the famous garden, but of all the poems which belong to the *Nibelungen* cycle it most nearly resembles the German national epic in subject as well as in spirit. It probably derives its origin from the natural desire to bring into direct conflict the two great national heroes of German legend—Siegfried of the Netherlands and Dietrich of Bern (Theodoric of Verona). At Worms upon the Rhine, Krimhild, the daughter of Gibich the Burgundian King, is mistress of a rose-garden, glorious and wide, fenced round only by a silken thread, but guarded by twelve mighty champions, who keep it against all comers. Among these champions are Gibich himself, his two sons, and, greatest of all, Siegfried, Krimhild's suitor—“Horn Siegfried,” the invulnerable Volsung hero. In the confidence of his heart Gibich offers to pay suit and service to whosoever, with a band of equal numbers, shall vanquish the Burgundian twelve, and force his way into the garden. Krimhild offers to each of the conquerors the additional reward of a garland of roses and a kiss from her own lips. Far away in Lombardy Dietrich hears of the presumptuous challenge, and, encouraged by old Hildebrand, his sage and faithful mentor, determines to take it up. Ten champions are speedily found to accompany their lord on his perilous undertaking. But for a long while a twelfth is not forthcoming. At last Hildebrand suggests his brother Ilsen. For many years Ilsen, once a mighty warrior, has not been seen in court or camp, and, in the seclusion of a monastery, is passing in tranquil piety the remainder of his days. But the battle-fire is not yet wholly quenched in the old monk's breast. When his brother's message comes he extorts leave of absence from his prior, once more buckles on his harness, and goes to join the eleven. The sequel of the story, which affords a congenial theme and copious material for the poet's war-loving muse, we need not follow in detail. Suffice it to say that after a series of desperate single combats, victory declares itself for the Lombard band.

The pride of the Burgundian King is humbled, the spirit of his haughty daughter tamed, the jealously-guarded bounds are crossed, and each of the victors receives his well-earned guerdon of a garland and a kiss.

This is the legend of the Rose-garden at Worms, in the German legendary cycle usually called, by way of distinction, the Greater Rose-garden. The story with which we are immediately concerned, and which is also to be found in the *Heldenbuch*, is there called the Lesser, or King Laurin's Rose-garden. It owes its origin to a different group of conceptions, and is associated with a different locality.

It was a pretty fancy, long and deeply rooted in the mind of country folk, which lent charms drawn from the invisible world to places which nature had left desolate or forbidding. Something of the divinity which our heathen forefathers attached to the solitude of their primæval forests still clung about the sacred spots, but in a more graceful and less sombre form. Under the names of elves and fairies, dwarfs and brownies, many a being of the pre-Christian mythology retained fast hold on the popular belief. By indications full of significance to the initiated in fairy lore, they betrayed their presence in their favourite haunts. An elfin bolt, an elf-knot in a tree, a fairy ring, a flying echo, or a dancing light, these and many another sign in wood and field were tokens from the unseen world. Sometimes a belated peasant, stumbling unawares on hallowed ground, had heard the patter of fairy footsteps, or caught the dying echoes of a tiny horn. Others, more favoured, had been admitted to the elfin realm and seen its glories ; and after long years, which passed as a single day, had returned to earth to find their compeers dead and gone, their children old men, and themselves forgotten. Could you but learn the secret, it was said, of this hollow tree, or of that gray stone, it would prove the portal to a subterranean palace of such magnificence, that all the treasures of this upper world would pale before it. Nay, it might well be that this barren heath, those frowning cliffs, were, after all, mere seeming ; and if the scales which dim our mortal vision could but drop from our eyes, we should find ourselves in a glorious and lovely garden, watered by rippling brooks and rich with flower and fruit. The Blumlis Alp, and many a similar name, bear witness to these beliefs ; and it is often only by them that we can explain the application to spots among the hills or on the moors of names which appear singularly inappropriate.

One of these innumerable legends had attached itself to the mountains of Tyrol. Somewhere among them was situate the realm of the dwarf-king Laurin, a mighty potentate in the elfin world. The mountaineers were never tired of repeating stories which illustrated his wealth and his power, his malice and his strength. One had been led astray by the echoings of his horn among the rocky fastnesses of the hills, and had but stayed his steps when already on the precipice's brink. Another had heard the hammer-clink which marked the spot where, deep within the bowels of the mountain, his subjects were seeking for and working the golden ore. But most of all their fancy was fond of dwelling on his magic

Rose-garden, which lay concealed somewhere in the wildest and most inaccessible part of the mountains. This was his one possession above the ground, and woe to the luckless wight who unwittingly overstepped its bounds. The mangled corpse of many a hunter found lying at the foot of a savage cliff bore witness to the jealousy with which the elfin-king watched his garden, and the inexorable severity with which he punished any infringement on his property rights. Nor is he always content with acting on the defensive ; too frequently he becomes the aggressor, and by repeated acts of tyranny and wanton oppression, asserts his suzerainty over the trembling inhabitants of the Alpine valleys.

It is on one of these acts, the abduction of a mortal maiden, and on her subsequent release, that is founded the legend which has perpetuated his name. The various written versions of the story which have survived to our time are all of them comparatively late, and each bears evident traces of being the recasting of an earlier original. Indeed, their authors appeal for confirmation of their story to the written sources from which they have borrowed. But these later versions, though agreeing in the main incidents, differ so much from each other, not merely in language, but in the names and numbers of the characters, and in the circumstances by which the story is introduced and embellished, that they cannot possibly have followed one and the same original.

Let us take, as probably the earliest, that which is to be found in one of the several editions of the German *Heldenbuch*. Simild, the fair daughter of Dieterolf of Styria, has gone out, accompanied by her maidens and by a joyous band of knights, to take her pastime "under the lindens green." Laurin is lurking in the wood, and his lawless fancy is smitten by the maiden's charms. Attired in his cap of darkness, he watches for a moment when she has strayed apart from her companions into the woods, and carries her off to his subterranean home. The loss is soon discovered. The attendants wring their hands, the knights are furious but equally helpless ; and Dietlieb, her brother, rides off to seek counsel from Hildebrand. Dietrich's sage old counsellor is now living at Gardenna, his castle on the Garda lake. He receives his guest with hospitality, hears his story, and next morning the two heroes, followed by a gallant company, ride off together to Bern (Verona) to obtain assistance at the court of Dietrich, the "Amelung's trost," the redresser of all wrongs. On their way an unhappy woodman begs their help, and describes in piteous terms the tyranny and oppression which Laurin exercises over the country-folk far and wide, and the savage vengeance which he exacts for trespasses, real or supposed, on the precincts of his magic garden. On their arrival at Bern, with an inconsequence not unusual in these rudely constructed stories, the original purpose of Dietlieb's expedition seems to be forgotten, and the interest is concentrated on the woodman's more recent tale of wrongs. The impetuous Witich, one of Dietrich's champions, persuades his master to accompany him to the scene of Laurin's cruelties, to beard the little tyrant in person, and to punish him for his

presumptuous acts against Dietrich's faithful subjects. The two set off together; and, after riding far, at last, in the midst of the savage wilderness of Tyrol, the wondrous garden suddenly bursts upon their sight. It is rich with flower and fruit, the air is sweet with the breath of roses, and rings with the song of birds. Dietrich fancies himself in Paradise, and cannot find it in his heart to harm such loveliness. But his companion overcomes his scruples by reminding him of Laurin's cruelty and haughtiness, and so they pass the magic bounds and enter the garden. Then comes the "looting." They slash and hack right and left with their swords, turn their horses loose to trample down and browse upon the roses, and soon reduce the object of the elfin-king's pride and tender care to a scene of ruin and desolation. Wearied with their exertions, the knights throw themselves on the grass to rest. But they are not left long in peace. Soon a figure is seen riding towards them, so glorious in its splendour, that Witich thinks it must be St. Michael. Still they deem it prudent to buckle on their armour. It turns out to be, in fact, the elfin-king himself. He is but three spans high, and he rides a steed no bigger than a goat, but his coat of mail and his trappings glitter like the sun with gold and precious stones. Full of wrath at the outrage which has been offered him, and the ruin which has been wrought, he assails the knights with bitter reproaches, and demands the instant payment of the penalty exacted by him from all trespassers—namely, the right hand and the left foot. Witich retorts with contemptuous taunts at the size of the tiny hero, and can scarcely be persuaded to mount his horse and meet him on equal terms. The combat does not last long. At the first assault Witich finds himself disarmed by the resistless lance of his adversary, who is proceeding to amputate the required hand and foot. Dietrich comes to his friend's help; but, in spite of his strength, valour, and renown, would speedily have met with the same fate, had it not been for the timely arrival of Hildebrand and Dietlieb. The elfin-king possesses three things of magic power, a ring and a girdle, each of which gives him the strength of twelve men, and a cap of darkness which makes him invisible. All day long the battle rages between the two heroes, and terrible are the blows dealt on either side, but Dietrich, aided by Hildebrand's sage counsel, strips his foe successively of the ring, the girdle, and the cap. Finding himself at his adversary's mercy, Laurin appeals in despair to Dietlieb, confesses that it is he who has carried off Simild; but says that he intends to make her his queen, and implores a brother-in-law's aid in the hour of need. The sudden appeal is not without effect. Dieltieb forgets the slightly irregular way in which the relationship had been formed, and rushes to Laurin's assistance. An unnatural combat would have ensued between Dietlieb and Dietrich, had not Hildebrand's prudent counsels prevented it and reconciled the contending parties. Laurin acknowledges Dietrich's superior might, professes to forgive the injury done to his garden, and invites the whole band to a royal Banquet

at his palace within the hill. The invitation is accepted, in spite of Hildebrand's prudent remonstrances, and they all ride off together in the moonlight till they reach the green meadows beneath the cliff, where lies the entrance to Laurin's subterranean realm. The hollow mountain re-echoes with the song and dance of elves, and when the golden horn is sounded, the door in the cliff-side flies open, and from within a glory of precious stones flashes out far into the night. High festival is held in the royal palace, and the fair Simild appears to greet her brother, and to preside at the banquet. But the treacherous dwarf has drugged the cups; and, after the feast, the heroes find themselves bound hand and foot, and thrown into a vault deep in the bowels of the mountain. Laurin determines to hang all except Dietlieb, whom he spares for his sister's sake. But in the night Simild frees her brother, and gives the other heroes rings, which deliver them from their magic fetters. And now follows a terrible fight within the hill. The corpses of dwarfs soon lie piled in heaps round Dietrich and his men; five mighty giants, summoned by Laurin to his aid, fall beneath the heroes' swords, and, at last all their foes are slain, Simild is freed, and Laurin is carried off to be a jester (*gaukler*) at the court of Bern.

Such is the story. There is a shorter and obviously later version in the *Heldenbuch* which bears the name of Caspar von der Roen, a compilation which appears to date from the latter half of the fifteenth century. As compared with the story which we have followed, this version is remarkable for the increasing rudeness of the language and conceptions, and for having departed still further from what was probably the original groundwork of the legend. The opening scene is not laid in Styria, but outside the walls of Bern (Verona), where we are introduced to Dietrich and his heroes taking their pleasure and carelessly plucking roses as they stroll up and down. Old Hildebrand remarks that he knows a garden where if they did what they were doing there, they would soon find themselves in evil plight. He then proceeds to describe the wonders of Laurin's garden, the wealth and power of its owner, and the penalties which he enforces on trespassers. The heroes' curiosity is excited, they have never heard that such marvels existed in their neighbourhood, and they resolve to go off and explore them. Having ridden off into the mountains, and at last hit upon the garden, they find their entrance barred by a golden gate. They try to kick it down, but the door resists, the kicks of single heroes, and so they resolve to take a run at it together—“*wir wollen es aufstossen mit eynem grosen zulauf.*” The door gives way beneath their united efforts, and they rush in and make havoc of the flowers and fruit-trees with their horses and swords. Henceforward the story is much the same as in the other version. It is to be noticed that the episodes of Simild's abduction, and of the woodman, are here quite omitted, and hence the destruction of Laurin's garden loses the justification in any previous outrage, and becomes a mere act of rude wantonness. Indeed, it must be confessed that in Caspar von

der Roen's version, Dietrich and his gallant companions talk and act very much like vulgar boors. When Laurin complains of the ruin of his garden, Dietrich begins to make a clumsy apology, to the effect that the roses would all come up again next year; but is cut short by Witich, who is indignant that even the semblance of an apology should be made to an adversary that rides a steed no bigger than a goat, and who threatens to take the little monster by the legs and throw him over his own wall.

However, none of the several versions in which the legend appears can lay claim to any artistic beauties of form. They are written in the rudest doggerel, the descriptions are tedious, and the episodes are awkwardly fitted together. Judged simply by the rules of form, the poem of the *Lesser Rose-garden* must be placed in the lowest class of literature. Its real interest consists in the questions which are suggested by the legend with which it deals. What are the sources out of which it grew up? what the influences by which it has been modified? what relation does it bear to popular fancy, to the epic cycle into which it has found its way, and to historical fact?

Who was the author of the poem in its present form, and what is its date? These are naturally the first questions which we should attempt to answer. Could we but believe the poem itself, there would be little difficulty about the former point, for it ends thus:—

Heinrich von Osterdingen
dise abentü gesungen hat,
das sie so meisterlichen stat :
des waren jm die fursten hold,
sie gabn jm silber und gold
pfennig und reiche wat.
hirmit dis buch ein ende hat
von den ausserwelten tegen :
Got geb uns allen seinen segen.

This assertion of authorship is plain enough: unfortunately, it is impossible to believe it, for what little we know of the alleged author throws him back to a time very far removed from that which the internal evidence of language and style shows to have been the date of our poem.

Heinrich von Osterdingen, or Ofterdingen, is a very shadowy personage. Where and when he lived, whence he got his name, whether from Oftertingen in Swabia, or Everdingen in Austria, indeed, whether he is a historical character at all, are almost equally matters of doubt. All, or almost all, we know of him is that he plays a prominent part in the *Wartburger Krieg* or *Wartburg War*. This is a poem which probably dates from the early part of the fourteenth century. It is a kind of "Sänger-Sage," or Minstrel Legend, and has for its subject a lyric tournament held, after the manner with which we have been made familiar by Tannhäuser, in the castle of Wartburg, the same of which, long afterwards, Luther was the illustrious tenant. In this poem Heinrich von Osterdingen appears as the poetical champion or representative of Leopold of Austria against

the rival claims of Hermann of Thuringia and King Philip Augustus of France. Accordingly, it appears that Osterdingen belonged, or was believed to belong, to the twelfth century, the so-called "Swabian era" of early German literature. Far different was the age to which our poem belongs. A glance at the revolutions through which German poetry had in the meantime passed will show the width of the gulf which separates the two eras.

The glories of the Swabian era, that bright spring-time of German literature, in which it seemed for a while that every class and every occupation burst into joyous, spontaneous, unpremeditated song, were of short duration. The so-called age of chivalry, of which the knightly *epos* or ballad was the reflex or idealization, passed away from Germany earlier than from any other European state. It may be said to have ended with the fall of the House of Hohenstaufen, and with it passed away something of tenderness and delicacy from the German music. The gay and careless life which the "minnesingers" reflected in their lays was succeeded by an age more troubled, more serious, and more prosaic. The change was to be regretted, though it in some respects marked an advance, but it was inevitable. It was in vain that the poets of the next generation strove to recall the charm which had fled. Instead of praising fair dames, and singing the pleasures of love, of the festival, and of war, they began to idealize the knightly life, and to make the knight the model of all the Christian virtues. Their ideal poet is as unreal as their ideal knight. The contending bards in the *Wartburg War* are represented as busying themselves with abstract questions and sophistical puzzles, fitter for a university than for a pleasure-loving court. The first result of this tendency was a hopeless divorce between poetry and real life, in consequence of which the former soon evaporated into vague sentimentalities and vapid conceits. But it had another result still less looked for by the poets themselves. The princes and nobles had left off composing poetry and encouraging literature. They had much more serious business to attend to—fighting and plundering. But the burghers, who meanwhile had become wealthy and important, liked hearing about courts and knightly heroes, especially when the latter were made the patterns of piety. They did not perceive the artificiality of the strains, and they were pleased with their moral tone. They constituted themselves liberal patrons of the neglected poet-craft, and under their auspices poetry became a lucrative profession. Thus arose the guilds of "meister-singers," who, for a long génération, delighted or wearied Germany with their dull moralities. Meanwhile, genuine poetry, which had been banished from the palace, and was stifled in the burgher's hall, fled away to the cottage. Everywhere in the country, especially in such parts as the highlands of Bavaria or the mountains of Tyrol, still lived the quaint fancies of the local mythology, tales of dwarf and nixen and mountain-sprite, and these were taken up by the itinerant singers who wandered from house to house, and interwoven strangely with fragments of the knightly *epos*.

Then followed an age which in some respects resembled the Alexandrian age in Greek literature. In the fifteenth century the invention of printing suggested the attempt to collect the scattered heritage of national poetry, and to fix it in a more permanent and definite form. The waifs and strays of legend and ballad, which were floating about the country in an oral form, were sought out, written down, and strung together in a rude order so as to form a kind of epic cycle. Just as in England, about the same time, Sir Thomas Malory compiled and printed his *Romance of Arthur*, so in Germany, throughout the fifteenth century, appeared various editions of the *Heldenbuch, or Book of Heroes*, a collection of the legends relating to the heroes of the incomplete German epic—Siegfried, Etzel, Dietrich, Hildebrand, and their like. It is needless to say that in such a collection would appear poems of widely different merit, and belonging to widely different ages, from the *Nibelungen Lied* with its rude heroic fire to the commonest ballad on a chapman's list. Yet even of these latter there are none which can be lightly passed by without examination. Imbedded in many of them may be found world-old beliefs and traditions, and traces of genuine poetic fancy, obscured though they be by frequent recastings, and defaced by illiterate handling. Of hardly any are the authors known, if, indeed, the term authorship can be applied to the process of formation which a popular legend undergoes beneath successive hands. But popular criticism is as little content to leave in obscurity the origin of poems as of institutions; and if it cannot find a Homer or Lycurgus ready to hand, will soon fashion them. Accordingly, the collectors of these poems, or more probably the "rhapsodes" who had recited them, did not scruple to father their rude lays on famous poets of the past. For this purpose they usually selected names belonging to the glorious "Swabian era" of the twelfth century, names which, as may be seen in the *Wartburg War*, had already become half-mythical in the next generation, and which were now appropriated and applied with as little scruple as the Greeks had shown in their treatment of the names of Homer, Linus, Orpheus, and Musæus. And thus it comes to pass that we find the knightly names of Oswald von Wölkenstein, of Heinrich von Ofterdingen, and of other noble "minnesingers," attached to rude productions which, by their uncouth garb and homely rustic sentiments, belie their putative origin at every point.

We cannot, then, ascribe to the poem of the *Lesser Rose-garden*, in the dress in which we are acquainted with it, an earlier date than the fifteenth century. The materials of which it is composed are, of course, far earlier. Perhaps the earliest written mention of King Laurin is in that same poem of the *Wartburg War* which has already been referred to once or twice. It tells a strange story about a dwarf king, Simels, who owns a land called "Palackers," which has the misfortune of being infested by monstrous worms, "crocodiles, they are called by the people of the land." He sends to his brother Laurin, who is lord of mountains "in Dutch land and in Welsh land," and who supplies him with two

griffin eggs, to be hatched by an ostrich, the produce of which apparently serves the purpose of extirpating the "worms." Before long, however, we find that Laurin has passed out of this region of grotesque fancy to take his place among historical characters. A Bavarian chronicler of the fifteenth century tells us how, "after King Adelgar, was ruler his son, King Lareyn, who was in honour and might one and fifty years, and of whom we still sing songs and tell stories." "There is still existing a whole book-full of rhymes about him, but they are fashioned in poetical wise," says this grave writer of history, who also informs us that "those of Tyrol and Eschland still show King Laurin's harness." The rationalistic method of interpreting legend reaches a still further stage in another writer of the same date, who speaks of "Count Laurenz of Tyrol," who is called Laurenz the strong, because of his great power and wealth, which his people dig for him out of the mountains, whence they are called "earth-mannikins" (*erdmännlein*). Two more notices shall be added to show how widely popular the legend had become, and what strange purposes it was made to serve. In a mystery play of the end of the fifteenth century we find among the soldiers of Herod the names of Dietrich, *Laurein*, and Hillebrant; whilst Martin Luther illustrates the allegorical method of interpretation by saying "as though I were to make of Dietrich of Bern, Christ; of the giant with whom he strove, the Devil; of the dwarf, Humility; and of his imprisonment, the death of Christ."

If we examine the poem in its present form, it is not difficult to detect in it the presence of two elements, originally independent of each other, and, even in the most perfect form of the legend, never thoroughly combined. It is evidently a dwarf story grafted on to the stock of Dietrich legends. The abduction of mortal maidens is an incident common in all dwarf legends, and it is only an afterthought which makes Laurin's victim the sister of the Styrian hero, Dietlieb, and which brings Dietrich to her rescue. The juncture of the two stories, one of which is concerned with the riches, power and capricious tyranny of the tiny monarch, the other with the exploits of the national hero, is but imperfectly accomplished, and the suture is still visible. At the date of the *Heldenbuch*, however, this ingrafting of the popular mythology on the heroic legend had struck deep root, and giants and dwarfs had become a recognized part of the epic poet's stock in trade. As to the part which dwarfs were supposed to play in the economy of the legendary world, let us hear what the fifteenth century editor of the *Heldenbuch* has to say:—

" You are also to know why God made the little dwarfs and the great giants, and thereafter the heroes. In the first place he made the dwarfs for this cause, that the land and the mountains were waste and untilled, and there was much store of silver and gold, precious stones, and pearls, in the mountains. Therefore God made the dwarfs exceeding cunning and wise, that they knew evil and good right well, and whereunto all things were good. They knew also whereunto the stones were good. Some stones give great strength. Some make them invisible that wear

them. That is called a 'nebel kap' (cap of darkness). And therefore God gave the dwarf craft and wisdom, that they built them fair hollow mountains, and he gave them honour, so that they were kings and lords as well as the heroes, and he gave them therewithal great riches. . . . There were also many kings among the dwarfs, who had giants to serve them. . . ."

Then he goes on to tell how the giants were created to slay the evil monsters which wasted the earth, and how after them came the heroes whose mission was to make war upon the paynim giants and dwarfs.

It is not our purpose to enter here into any speculations as to the origin of the belief in dwarfs, and the psychological tendencies out of which it grew. Only two points with reference to it shall here be mentioned, both of which are naturally suggested by the Laurin legend.

The first consideration is of wider application than to dwarf legends, and extends to all similar mythological beliefs. We are accustomed to speak of the "insensibility of the ancients to natural scenery." This phrase, when analyzed, may be found to mean one of two things—either that the mind of the "ancients" was so constituted as to be actually insensible to the beauty or grandeur of inanimate nature, or that this sensibility took a different form from what it does with us. The first of these assertions we should deny, the second we should attempt to explain. The position of mind involved in the aesthetic appreciation of an object implies something of a conscious superiority to the object appreciated, in so far, at least, as the critic feels that he has to some extent mastered it, and attained to an apprehension of its true nature and import, and of the laws by which it is determined. In order to arrive at this state the mind must have consciously detached itself from and externalized the objects surveyed, to which it then lends charms drawn from its own feelings or imagination. But this artificial relation to nature is utterly different to that in which the Greek found himself. Mr. Ruskin's delight in scenery is as widely diverse from that of Homer as the reflective pantheism of Wordsworth from the simple nature worship of primitive religions. Even the cultivated Greek of a later day was not wholly free from the primitive feeling of vague terror or reverential awe excited by natural phenomena, a sentiment which lurks behind the Epicurean's strained professions of indifference, and which the Greek's ignorance and neglect of physical science tended to perpetuate. Thus in him the polytheistic view lingered on in spite of his philosophy. "No one praises the gods," says Aristotle; and, in like manner, we may say that whilst nature remained mysterious and unknown it could not be made the subject of descriptions or æsthetic criticism. But we must not therefore conclude that its different aspects exercised no influence upon the mind. It influenced, but influenced in a different way. Where the cultivated man reflects, the child or the uncultivated man receives impressions. The emotions excited in him by beauty or grandeur assume an objective form, and body themselves forth as mythological entities. Graceful

dryads and blithe fairies dance over his forest lawns, mysterious beings haunt his mountains. According as delight in the charms of nature or terror of its unknown powers preponderate, the fancy assumes a brighter or a more sombre hue, and the entities which it creates appear as friends of the human race or as their foes. Hence we need not wonder that it is precisely round the most romantic spots—those on which tourists now-a-days lavish expressions of wonder and admiration—that legendary and mythological fancies most thickly clustered. This same region of Tyrol, where Laurin ruled, gave birth to a whole world of marvels and adventures, all coloured by the scenery amongst which they grew up; and, like it, sometimes delicate and lovely, sometimes monstrous or grotesque. Here is one, instinct with the very spirit of the Adige valley, its alternating sternness and grace. Alone, beneath the solemn walls of rock which close in the Adige on either side, rides the young Otnit, to find that of which he has dreamed. The sun is shining over the mountains and piercing the clouds, when he comes to a meadow by the Garda Lake, where bright flowers and tender grass shoot forth on every side, and the air is ringing with the song of birds. A path, marked by the track of tiny feet, leads him to the fountain, and to the linden-tree which might give shade to five hundred knights. Under it he finds his father, King Elberich, comeliest of the elfin race, and lord of many a mountain and valley. Elberich brings forth, out of a hollow in the cliff, flashing armour, in which the young knight arrays himself, and rides off joyfully through the greenwood. In the savage mountains above Trent lurk the dragons which waste the land as far as the bower at Garda. With horn and hound Otnit rides into the wilderness to slay the monsters. A fairy throws him into a magic slumber, and long keeps him prisoner within a hollow rock, but he escapes, fights with and slays the dragons, but at last himself falls a victim to treacherous arts. His horse and hound find their way back to Garda, and thereby the empress, who sits waiting for him before the gate, first learns of his death.

One other point may be mentioned about dwarf legends—a peculiarity which derives its origin from the sudden shock given to German mythology by the introduction of Christianity. The dwarfs are always heathens; Laurin is expressly called a pagan: indeed, as representatives of a pre-Christian mythology, the dwarfs could hardly be otherwise. But it is interesting to note the modifications which this difference of creed introduces into their relation to men. This relation is rarely that of direct and uncompromising hostility. Much more often it takes the form of a kind of indefinite estrangement, not unaccompanied by kindly acts and feelings on either side, but constantly in danger of being converted into direct enmity by disrespectful treatment on the one side or malicious tricks on the other. The dwarfs and elves give one the impression of a shy and shrinking, and, on the whole, hardly-treated race, retiring before new and powerful comers, and driven by the ruthless advance of civilization from the woods and mountains which were once their own. They belong to an old, old

world—to a state of things which is passing away. They charge mortals with faithlessness, that is to say, desertion of the old creed. They dislike church building and the sound of church bells. Indeed, all innovations are distasteful to them—the ploughing-up of forests or moors, the working of new mines in the hills. It would seem as if the peasant had thrown into this creation of his fancy all his conservative instincts, all his lingering fond regrets for the old beliefs and the old ways which he was reluctantly compelled to abandon.

So much for one half of our story. On the other half we will not dwell long. The Dietrich legend evidently belongs to the cycle of Ostrogothic legends which glorify the exploits of the Amelung race—of Ermenrich, of Dietrich, and of Hildebrand. The local names round which they circle are Raben, Bern, and Garden (Ravenna, Verona, and the fortress near the Garda Lake); it is especially the two latter, and the Adige valley generally, which seems to have been their peculiar home, where they struck deepest root and lingered longest. The castle of old Hildebrand was long shown on the Brenner Pass, above the "Berner Klause;" the country-folk may possibly know of it to this day. This cycle of legends, however, soon travelled beyond its own home, and received additions and modifications from other sources. As a nation advances to unity, its local and tribal cults, beliefs, traditions, necessarily and naturally pass through successive stages of connection, of assimilation, and of fusion. Thus we have seen how, in the *Greater Rose-garden*, the Dietrich legend was brought into connection with those which relate to the Netherland hero and to the Burgundian house; and how, in the *Lesser Rose-garden*, it gathered into itself a popular mythological belief.

More difficult to determine than the relations of legends to each other is the relation of legend or myth to history. In the case of the German epic cycle we have what the historians of early Greece have not, a historical narration marching alongside of poetry and romance, and professing to deal with the same persons and events, so that we are enabled to compare and contrast the two. It must be confessed that the result of the comparison is not such as to encourage those who labour to unravel a thread of positive history from the tangled web of tradition and legend. It seems to come to little more than this, that history may be, and constantly is, the *occasion* of legend. Striking events and striking characters—we may add, striking natural objects—are gathered into and become part of the mythological system which forms the mental atmosphere of the prehistoric or unhistoric man. But what shape they will there assume it is impossible to predict. Often the copy resembles the original no more than the precipice over which we fall in a nightmare resembles the crease in our sheet which has caused a momentary irritation, and given a direction to our disturbed fancies. What is there in common between Dietrich, the knight errant, Ermenrich's nephew, the homeless fugitive at Etzel's court, and the great and prosperous Theodoric, who lived one hundred years after Hermanarie, and was born two years after Attila's death? Mythology

knows nothing of the laws of time or space. It presents a confused phantasmagoria, in which persons and events the most incongruous are mingled together like "the jumbled rubbish of a dream." Possibly, in the fight among the mountains and the destruction of Laurin's garden, we may catch faint echoes of a time when fierce bands of horsemen, Lombard or Bavarian, came riding through the Adige valley, trampling down the corn-fields and gardens of the hapless mountain people, harrying and pillaging their homesteads, and driving them to seek refuge far away among secluded valleys or uplands. These, however, are but guesses made probable by what we learn from history, but profitless if history were not by to confirm them.

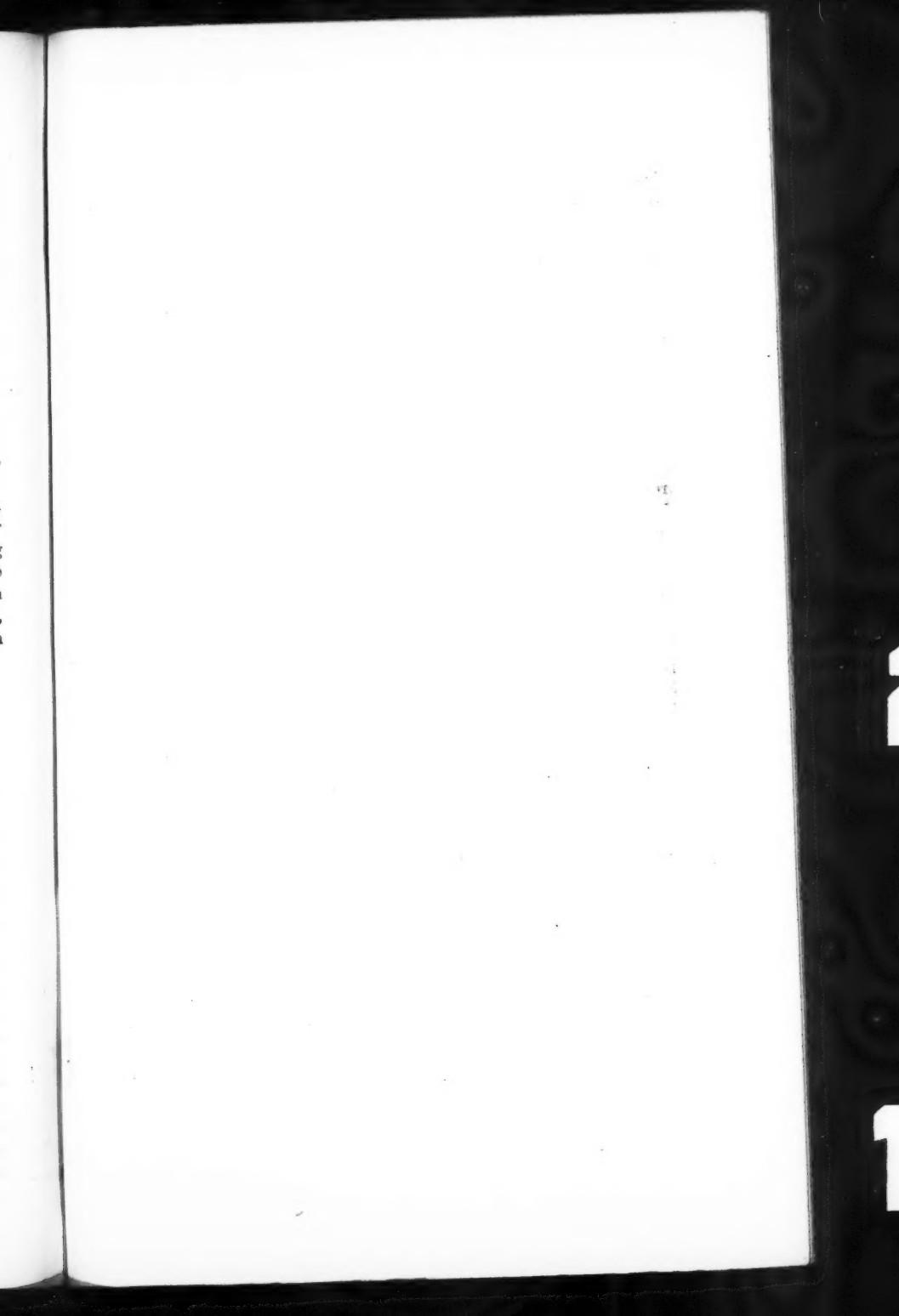
Behind the Rosengarten peaks lies a fair land, rich in its contrasts of fertile field and barren rock, and in its magical brilliancy of contrasted colours. It is close to the great high road from Germany to Venetia, yet few travellers enter into it; and of those who have done so many return with tales of uncouth language, and scanty food, and hard lodgings, and such other hardships as the degenerate adventurers of our day encounter. Possibly they may have had a motive for exaggerating these drawbacks; at all events, those who know the country well and love it hope that the day may be far distant before hordes of rude western barbarians, members of the Alpine club and such as follow in their train, break down the invisible fence which has hitherto shut off intruders from this enchanted ground.

In Late Autumn.

PRIMROSE and cowslip have I gathered here,
Anemone and hiding violet,
When April sang the Spring song of the year :
Now all is changed; the Autumn day is wet
With clouds blown from the West, and vapours fold
Over the dropping woods and vacant wold;
The latest flower of the field is dead;
The birds that sang to me are mute or fled,
Save one that like a larger berry clings
On the green holly bush, and sings and sings
A farewell to the sun that, low and pale,
Lightens a wild sky like a distant fire;
The wind beats on the tree-tops like a flail,
And strews the red leaves in the pools and mire.

CHARLES DENYS CONWAY.

October, 1869.





MAUDE'S FINGERS PAUSED ON THE KNOT FOR A SECOND.

Against Time.

CHAPTER XXVII.

MR. HEMPRIGGE SACRIFICES HIS CONSCIENCE.



FATE and Time weave each little incident of our lives in webs so complex that it is given to nothing short of omniscience to disentangle the minutest portion of individual threads. If Helen's nurse had dropped her in infancy, picking the child up with injured spine and fractured nose, what woes unnumbered would have been spared the world of her time. Paris would have travelled untempted, and Priam might have died happy. Trojan chiefs and Grecian heroes would have sunk unsung into forgotten graves; but we should never have been shocked

with the crimes of Clytemnestra, or seen the Furies dogging the heels of Orestes. It was Helen's smiles drew Dido's tears. Her beauty seated the mistress of the world on the Seven Hills, wrote the history and raised the monuments that hallow the Eternal City, dowering it with its precious legacy of associations and ruins. So to this day Helen makes the fortunes of hotel-keepers and cicerones, and sends on their pilgrimage the hundreds of English families who winterly cluster themselves below the Pincian. If Buonaparte *sils* had been carried off by Corsican malaria, or Buonaparte *père* shot down in Corsican vendetta, what weeping and gnashing of teeth must have been spared the households of the century, what crowds of men who fell in war would have lived in peace, and how much picturesque mediaeval architecture would have been spared to cumber the political map and block the march of ideas. If Luther had only seen his vocation in the sword instead of the gown,—but it is idle to multiply instances; and, just as much as Sirens of passion or thunderbolts of war and controversy, does the most insignificant shred of humanity twine itself through the chequered pattern of nobler existences.

A navvy, of intelligence something below the brute in the truck he loads, as the *suites* of some pothouse quarrel with a stoker, sends the

express his enemy stokes flying off the rails, and precipitates its passengers into eternity or the hospitals. One of them is the great Minister whose hand is extended to pluck the fuse from some great international question pregnant with peril : the bomb explodes, and half a dozen of thrones are shattered into fragments. Another is the savant who carries to his grave the secret that would have been the blessing of unborn generations. The engine-driver leaves a promising young family, and the orphans take to evil courses, the parish, the prison, and the hulks. The graceful girl, flying townwards full of love and hope, drives her head through the hat-box of the gentleman opposite, mars her beauty, gets jilted, churns all her milk of human kindness into gall, resigns herself to scandal and mischief-making, and dies detested, a soured old maid ; while young Briefless, her struggling cousin, retained in that grand breach-of-promise case, makes the soul-stirring appeal to the jury that starts him on his rush to the highest place in his profession. All because Bill, the unlucky stoker, was unhappy in his family circle and preferred the tap-room at the "Railway Whistle" to the domestic hearth, and so a poor labourer's unlucky matrimonial choice may dismember an empire or make a Lord Chief-Judge of England.

And Lucy Winter's likings and Mr. Hemprigge's loves were matters of vital consequence, not only to Hugh Childersleigh and his kinsman George, but, had they only known it, to the numerous and influential shareholders of the Crédit Foncier of Turkey ; to the clients and connection with whom that great establishment had its dealings at home and abroad ; to capitalists who dictated their own terms to European treasuries ; to contractors developing the resources of the East with the money of the West ; to rayahs scratching long furrows on Bulgarian plaius ; to peasants grilling over their daily toil under Syrian palms.

With all his natural anxiety to put a period to his fidgeting suspense, in ordinary circumstances our friend Hemprigge was the very last man to snatch at fruit before he was sure it was mellow, to take a leap without looking well where he was likely to land. As we have had occasion to remark, his profound self-admiration did not blind him to the fact that it was not shared by Lucy as he could have desired ; and with all his wish to anticipate a fancied rival, he would have been slow to force the running at the risk of being out of the race. It was an object with him, to be sure, the cutting short the idle extravagances his novel rôle of philanthropist involved him in. But he could not but be persuaded that his unassuming charity and unwearying benevolence were the surest allies he had found as yet ; and in his appreciation of the benefits of lavish advertising, of the profits flowing from the puff direct, not even Solomons of the Cosmopolitan Clothes-mart, or Potter of the Essence of Life, were more on a level with the spirit of the times. However, the sagest man proposes in vain, and Hemprigge found his deep-laid plans deranged, his carefully-sorted hand forced and spoiled by the very individual whose unintentional help he and his counsellor Hooker had so confidently counted on.

One day after office-hours he bent his thoughtful way to "The Cedars," his pocket-book bulging with important memoranda relating to the affairs of the Orphanage; his heart glowing with the generous conception that trembled on his lips. He had found by expensive experiences the goddess he worshipped could best be propitiated by gifts, and the richer the presents the warmer the reception. To be sure the gifts she was so graciously grateful for were, so far as she was concerned, vicarious ones; lavished on her *protégées*, and not upon herself. Worse luck, her admirer told himself bitterly. Had it been otherwise, his free charity might have begun and ended in the home he fondly hoped they might one day share. This afternoon, however, saw him in high spirits. For the first time he had thought of appropriating to his own use one of those economically ostentatious ideas so popular among the beneficent; where charity accepts a bill at an indefinitely distant day, scrupulously guarding itself against having to meet it by a long succession of contingencies—an idea by which, in selfish violation of the precept, its right hand not only takes its left into its confidence, but all the world besides. In short, Mr. Hemprigge went prepared to pledge himself to a donation of 500*l.* to the struggling Hampstead institution, to be forthcoming on the understanding that forty-nine equally noble-hearted individuals should be found to follow his lead and commit themselves to a similar extent.

The servant would inquire if Miss Childersleigh was at home. One of the most unpleasant signs of his suit was that Hemprigge could never force the *consigne* of his idol's gate without a parley; could never flatter himself he stood on the footing of the friend of the family,—with its ladies at least. This time, however, the man quickly returned to beg Mr. Hemprigge to follow him—Miss Childersleigh was at home and would be happy to receive him. As they approached the door of the small drawing-room the rattle of cups told him the ladies were indulging in that unseasonable and unreasonable five-o'clock repast, so endeared to feminine eccentricity by habit and fashion that it swallows down the boiling beverage in the dog-days and fancies it likes it. With all his weaknesses Hemprigge was a rational and intelligent man, but he was a lover too, and, moreover, as we know, not overburdened with scruples in the means he chose to his ends, so he rather congratulated himself on finding the ladies so snugly and sociably disposed.

He stepped in with a more assured step than usual, a smile of honest satisfaction beaming on his face, and his manner artistically toned down to friendly but respectful familiarity. But he stopped his silky spring involuntarily for a second; it was so often his evil chance to find himself in company other than he bargained for. There was Sir Basil standing cup in hand upon the rug instead of occupying an identical spot on that of "Doodles," as was his methodical custom of an afternoon, and to "Doodles" his smiling guest would have been devoutly glad to have banished him at that moment. And there, in a comfortable arm-chair, rolled up between the fire and the sofa-corner occupied by Maude, lolled

Lord Rushbrook, his lordship looking every whit as much at home as Sir Basil.

"Why, Hemprigge," he exclaimed in a voice most cheerily hearty, and almost softened to affection, "what a delightfully unexpected surprise meeting you so shortly after my return, and at 'The Cedars,' too, of all places in the world!" But with all his warmth, his lordship did not raise by an inch the head that rested indolently on the low cushion, did not even uncross his leg or stretch out the hand that played with his teaspoon. Nothing short of the cordiality of the greeting could have carried off the incivility of the studied inaction.

Hemprigge felt it all, and smarted inwardly; indeed, he generally found himself on thorns when in contact with the affable Deputy-Governor, who seemed to know by intuition the secretary's sensitive points, and love to roll himself over them like a sleek cat with its claws out. As he saw him seated there, and heard once more the pleasant tones that always sounded to his fancy so sharp and so mocking, he marvelled how he and Hooker could ever have taken that very one-sided view of things; how they had ever duped themselves to dream of hope and luck in Rushbrook's presence at "The Cedars." Desperate men do catch at straws, but this, he told himself now, was the maddest instance of self-deception. For Hooker to argue so might be all very well: Hooker had neither his brains nor the secret of his relations with his lordship. For himself, when making his silky approaches to Lucy in the neighbourhood of the watchful Maude, he always felt like a novice walking the tight-rope; but with those mocking eyes of Rushbrook looking on as well, neither brains nor balance-pole could save him from grief. And if the other seriously proposed making Miss Childersleigh Lady Rushbrook, would he, of all men, if he could help it, tolerate his wife's bosom-friend giving her hand to Mr. Hemprigge? While he was stammering out his broken phrases to the ladies, and words of course to the gentlemen, his active mind was galloping over the ground we have just crossed more deliberately, and his sinking heart told him his cherished hopes were doomed to fatal failure. Yet all the time his stubborn nature sought defiantly to shake off the unwelcome conviction, and he came to a dogged determination to ask the long-considered question, for his own satisfaction, and have the matter settled out of hand and once for all.

"Why, Hemprigge," his lordship went on, rallying him pleasantly, "I have not seen you so absent since the day your zeal sent you on that unlucky business-trip to Killoden. To be sure, by the way, I haven't seen you at all. You look positively ill. You really must take care of yourself. Ah, professional enthusiasm will be the death of you if you don't take care, as I think Hugh Childersleigh warned you that morning in the Highlands. You overdo the interest you take in that fortunate Company of ours. Absolutely you think of nothing else."

"You do Mr. Hemprigge great injustice when you say so," interrupted Maude, good-naturedly coming to her visitor's assistance, who for some

reason or other was embarrassed and put out, as she saw. "We have good cause to know he has interest to spare for other things, or the prospects of our orphanage would have looked much blacker than they do."

"Yet that doesn't surprise me at all, I assure you. I have heard of Hemprigge coming to the assistance of orphans and minors too, before now," returned Rushbrook gravely, trying hard, although in vain, to catch the secretary's eye.

"He has done a great deal for ours," pursued Maude, with equal seriousness. "I don't know where we should have been now if he had not put his shoulder to the wheel when things seemed at a standstill. Do you, Lucy?"

"No, indeed!" assented that young lady warmly, detecting the irony in Rushbrook's tone, and feeling for the moment indignant at his injustice. Then, recollecting some obscure intimations of Hemprigge on the occasion of their last interview, she went on: "I have no doubt nothing but his good nature brought him here to-day; some happy idea to help us through our money troubles," and as she looked inquiringly at Hemprigge, he could not help reading more of encouragement in her looks than he had ever seen there.

Had that unlucky Rushbrook only stayed in Paris, or wherever else he had come from, what innocently unconscious warmth he would have thrown into the explanation of his generous conception. But it would chill the glow of a Howard, and check the charity of a Peabody, to be constrained to talk philanthropy raked by the sardonic grin of a Mephistopheles. However, there was no help for it: as his sarcastic friend had turned up, and apparently with no present intention of departing, it was no use whatever reserving his scheme, so he broached it accordingly, although, perhaps, in a more matter-of-fact manner than he might have done under circumstances more favourable.

"How very thoughtful you are, Mr. Hemprigge," exclaimed Maude, earnestly. "But I feel we are really taking advantage of you, in drawing so heavily on your money and your time for this selfish object of ours. You must have so many others with equal claims."

Lucy's face too had lighted up with hope and pleasure. By a rapid and simple act of mental arithmetic she had made the calculation that Mr. Hemprigge proposed to be their benefactor to the tune of 25,000*l.*, and she felt proportionately grateful.

"With all your other calls," she chimed in, and again her looks fanned Hemprigge's hopes into a flicker. At last she was becoming alive to the existence of the heart she had so persistently refused to believe in, and inclining in her remorse to make atonement for her cold-blooded scepticism.

The gentlemen were less touched with the trait of liberality.

"I don't know where Mr. Hemprigge looks to find those nine-and-forty liberal friends of his," growled Sir Basil. "I may profess to know something of Lombard Street at least, and I greatly question if a single man in it will be disposed to follow him in the list he heads. What we

can afford we give and without condition, in our straightforward business-like way."

With all his liking for Hemprigge, Sir Basil had been considerably scandalized at his presumption in coming to Hampstead at all to cap the banker's donation. He was indignant now at this indirect pressure, which might possibly lay him in the long run under further contributions, to the glory of Hemprigge and without any credit to himself. Hemprigge hastened to deprecate the indignation of his honoured host.

"Of course, Sir Basil, Lombard Street, as befits its great position, has done most liberally—always taking the lead in every generous work. But your unfailing charity there invites so many appeals, that just because you are always giving you must of necessity set limits to your bounty. Now with us new men it is quite a different thing. I fear," he proceeded, with a charming candour, "I fear the black sheep among us get us an evil reputation if they don't taint the flock. Somehow it is too rarely a man like me gets the chance of helping in a work like this, and I confess it is more seldom still we go out of our way to volunteer. But believe me," he added, turning appealing eyes on Miss Winter, for he saw hers following him with approval—"Believe me, we are not altogether the heathen fellows we seem. I'll do my best at least, to disabuse you by filling up this list from acquaintances of my own. If I fail, all I can say is, I shall be as much surprised as disappointed."

"I really fear you are an optimist, Hemprigge," broke in Rushbrook. "I do indeed. I should be the last man in the world to dash your hopeful enthusiasm, but I must say I can't quite agree with you in this. I see Miss Winter's face fall, and I'm grieved, I'm sure, to disenchant her of the faith in human nature you would teach. But to convince her that I'm honest at least, I'll bet—no, I won't bet on such a subject, and against my wishes too; but I'll gladly promise to come down with a sum of 500*l.*, or, say, a couple of them, when you have received the other seven-and-forty.

"I am quite sure you would never have made the offer, my lord, were you not in your heart as hopeful as Mr. Hemprigge;" and there was so much good faith in the beaming smile with which Maude accompanied the words, that, in spite of himself, he blushed guiltily, and looked nearly as much put out as Hemprigge had done the moment before.

That gentleman, quick to remark the enemy's confusion, and a good deal cheered by it, had produced his memorandum-book again, and was making an entry in it in a most matter-of-fact manner. "We shall claim your liberal promise before long, my lord," he said, with a confidence of manner that answered its purpose in imposing on the ladies; and then he naturally turned the conversation on the charity and its prospects. Rushbrook, on his best behaviour, carefully avoided any levity of tone, although he sat listening to the Honorary Secretary of the Orphanage with signs of growing impatience. Sir Basil had set down his cup and buried himself in the columns of the evening paper.

Rushbrook, indeed, had had more than enough of it. His colleague's talk moved him in a way very unusual with him. "Confound the fellow!" he muttered; "he's got through the business that brought him here; he's humbugged these girls more than enough; why can't he take himself off."

But Hemprigge had no idea of taking himself off just then, if he could help it; and although the presence of his lordship disconcerted him not a little, he had defiantly made up his mind it should not disturb his combinations. Although his agreeable conversation did not show a trace of impatience, yet his eye kept nervously glancing at the clock, watching the hands slowly working themselves round towards the hour that usually brought the appearance of the methodical Purkiss. Purkiss knew of his friend's intended visit and had given him assurance of coming to his aid. Hemprigge fully meant to be asked to stay to dinner; but Sir Basil evidently had no intention of doing it, and he greatly doubted the good nature or gratitude of Maude carrying her so far. Moreover, Rushbrook had only to change his seat to where he could catch her eye, and then the Manager felt there would not be a chance of it.

At last the longed-for step sounded in the passage, and Purkiss entered in an unusual rush of affability. For a variety of reasons he never looked so amiable as when pressing the hospitality of his home on his friend Hemprigge.

"Ah! Lord Rushbrook here. How do you do? Delighted to see you looking so well. And you too, Hemprigge: after what you said, I half hoped to find you. You have persuaded our friends to stay to dinner, Maude, I trust?"

"I shall be very glad indeed if they will, I'm sure," said Maude, speaking to Hemprigge, and looking at Rushbrook, and for once submitting without resentment to the awkward but irresistible pressure put on her by her brother.

"A thousand thanks," said the nobleman quickly; "with the greatest pleasure, if you will take me *sans façon*, and in morning dress."

"I should be delighted," answered Hemprigge, "did I not fear I was taking advantage of Miss Childersleigh's good nature?"

"The good nature is all on your side," returned Purkiss, with unwonted heartiness. "People who live out of the way like us are only too pleased to catch their friends as they can."

So the impromptu party was arranged; Sir Basil rousing from his paper, deigning to express his satisfaction, and stopping, later, on the way to his dressing-room, to exchange a word or two with the butler on the matter of wines.

The dinner passed off pleasantly enough; Rushbrook striving his utmost to efface any disagreeable impressions the ill-timed levity of his before-dinner talk might have produced on his hostess; struggling against his besetting sin, and especially careful to banish any irony from his manner, when in general conversation he answered the remarks of

Hemprigge. That gentleman, conscious that his evening's work might be a turning-point in his life, and that he would need courage, at least as much as tact, to carry him through with it, let the butler fill up his glasses oftener than was his wont, and recommended himself to Sir Basil after dinner by a closer application than usual to the venerable port. When they made the move to the drawing-room he was flushed—to steal a term from French cookery-books—*au point*, and felt himself not only equal to availing himself of opportunities, but to creating them if need were. But love and fortune stood his friends: Purkiss actively, Sir Basil passively, and Lord Rushbrook unwittingly, all three played into his hands. The former gentleman eclipsed himself on the way from the dining-room, disappearing up the stairs. His father disposed himself comfortably in his chair, and leaving the ladies to do the honours of the drawing-room to his guests, betook himself to dreamland. He did not often go to sleep after dinner, but when he did, as they all knew by experience, nothing short of violence could bring the baronet back to a consciousness of the realities of life.

As for Lord Rushbrook, he was to the full as bent on a few words with Maude as Hemprigge was eager to be alone with Lucy. But as his confidences had nothing to do with the gentle passion, there was nothing of consciousness to dash the hardihood with which he carried her off to the piano, discountenancing her suggestion of a duet. The instrument stood in the larger drawing-room, half out of sight.

"Pray play something noisy, Miss Childersleigh; plenty of execution, and as little *pianissimo* about it as may be," he whispered. "To be quite frank with you, I asked your music only to drown our talk."

Maude may have had suspicions of her own about what might possibly be coming. Her fingers trembled slightly as she busied herself among her music-books, and seizing without a word on the volume that came first to hand, she bent her head over the piano, and opened full cry in the hunter's chorus in *Der Freischütz*.

Lord Rushbrook may have guessed what was passing in her mind; for instead of taking prompt advantage of the crash, he hesitated in a way very unlike him. But as he caught a glimpse of Hemprigge's shadow falling on the opposite wall, his softening expression hardened back to decision and impatience.

"I'm going to test our friendship, Miss Childersleigh, and hazard losing myself for ever in your good opinion. It all depends on how you take what I'm going to say. At least, you must believe in my interest in you and all that concerns you, since it forces me to do an excessively disagreeable thing and one very much out of my usual way."

"The solemnity of your preface makes me tremble for what is to follow. What can you mean, Lord Rushbrook?"

"Don't laugh, when for once I'm grave enough. I mean to impart to you my very unflattering opinion of a guest of your father's, and speak evil behind his back of a friend of your brother's."

Maude's fingers paused on the keys for a second. "I can't pretend to misunderstand you. Mr. Hemprigge, of course."

"Precisely so; but pray play on. For your sake I don't desire he should overhear us or suspect we are discussing him. Not either for his or mine most certainly." He had come round to her side and was looking her in the face, and he drew himself up with a dignity she had never seen in him before, but yet Maude acknowledged to herself it sat strangely well on his careless features.

"I had thought," she returned, in a slightly disappointed tone,— "may I say I hoped?—that your light manner before dinner was assumed to cover your real sympathy with us?"

"You did me injustice, then, or more than justice, when you took for earnest the offer that both Hemprigge and I knew for sarcasm. To see him parading himself among the charitable would be enough to disgust any sensible man with charity for life. I happen to hate hypocrisy; yet to be frank, so far as I am concerned, he might have figured in Tartuffe as he pleased elsewhere. I am conscious of far too many peccadilloes of my own to go playing the knight-errant among other sinners and their vices. But when he has the brazen audacity to abuse your goodness in my presence, and clearly for some unworthy purpose, too, my indignation gets the better of my selfishness. Believe me, speaking as I speak now is the most painful and unselfish thing I have done for long. But I happen to know this man well, that he's one who always crawls for choice along crooked paths; and as I do know him, and you do not, it shall be no fault of mine if he leaves his trail here, or makes the boast that his craft has fooled your innocence."

"I think you do him injustice; very unintentionally I am sure," returned Maude, speaking doubtfully though. "Once I used to feel positive antipathy to him, perhaps I do not greatly like him now, but in spite of myself his recent conduct has overcome my prejudices and taught me to distrust my first impressions. You cannot know, of course, how delicately generous he has been, or anything of the endless trouble he has given himself about that orphanage he knew we were interested in. The more we have seen him, the better reason have we had to believe him very different from what we once imagined."

"From himself, Miss Childersleigh. Yes, precisely so. When Hemprigge calls himself as a witness to his own character, you may be sure there will be abundant testimony forthcoming to his excellences, and material proofs in plenty to back it with. To do him justice, he never grudges money when parting with it serves his ends, and yet when he can he always makes his brains save his purse. That latest trait of generosity of his—that conditional 500^{l.}, was admirably characteristic."

"You will surely not try to persuade me, my lord, to put so uncharitable a construction on what may very well have been the charity I thought it," said Maude, appealingly.

"Be sure, Miss Childersleigh, had mine been merely suspicious, I

should have kept them to myself. On nothing short of absolute conviction would I wish to shake your faith in any man's better nature. It is just like you to speak as you do, but it puts me on my trial as well as Hemprigge, and of all the world I can least afford to have you condemn me, and for meanness too. I must convince you that you judge him by yourself, that it is your own nature that inclines you to put a favourable construction on his motives. Your good sense must tell you a man's whole life should speak for him, not the actions of a month. One swallow does not make a summer, and who ever heard before of Hemprigge doing one solitary good deed, or troubling his head about the well-being of any of his fellow-mortals?"

"Nay, it is, maybe, only your ignorance of him makes you do him an injustice. What he does, he does most unobtrusively, and this is but one of many——"

"Hemprigge do good by stealth!" Rushbrook laughed bitterly. "On my honour, the idea is too atrociously barefaced even for him, and to suggest it in a house where Hugh Childersleigh and I are visitors is most unlike his usual prudence. He must have strong reasons of his own for venturing a bold *coup*. Why, Miss Childersleigh, as we have begun with confidences, we must go on; and if my own character suffer in course of them, at least it will be some pledge for my sincerity. It was I who first brought Hugh and him together, and I have known him for years. He has made it his profession to seek out business, I will not say dishonourable, but certainly degrading, and more so by far for the agent than the client. As money-lender at five-and-twenty he had all the avaricious spirit of his trade, and while a spendthrift by taste, was always a miser at heart. What chance, do you think, had charity, when avarice and prodigality were struggling for his purse!"

"If this is all true,—and I cannot for a moment doubt it,—I agree with you that Mr. Hemprigge has been very much out of place here. I think besides——" She stopped, but her face finished the sentence.

"You think that we who know something of his character, are at least as much to blame as he. Well, perhaps so, and yet had I known either you or him one bit less than I do, had I not assisted at that display of unblushing impudence this afternoon, I for one should have been silent still. If society were not a general masquerade, believe me we should see but empty salons. Remember besides, a good many know, and a great many more suspect, all I have told you, and yet Hemprigge stands fair in the eyes of the world and fills, to universal admiration, the post of Manager to that Company of ours."

"How could your cousin, Mr. Childersleigh, ever stoop to associate himself so closely with a man like that?"

"Don't blame Hugh, or, if you do, recollect, at least, I am a hundred times more in fault, and with far slighter excuse. I had dealings with Hemprigge professionally, on lighter temptation, and took him up

socially for no reason whatever but my own passing amusement. I introduced him to my father's dinner-table, and presented him at my mother's receptions. Fortunately you have no idea, Miss Childersleigh, how susceptibilities get blunted with knocking about the world, and if a man like Hemprigge only push his opportunities with moderation, he may go a very long way. If certificates of virtue and honour were essential preliminaries to arranging business connections, forgery, I fear, would be a thriving trade; and Hemprigge came to Hugh's aid in a critical moment, much as despair used to raise the devil at one's elbow in the old legends. Besides Hugh knew him less then than he does now; I fancy were he altogether his own master, were it not for some gratitude he believes he owes him, he would be only too glad to shake him off at once and for ever."

"But what should have made it worth his while to act as he has been doing? What do you imagine brings him here?"

"Why,—that—I should be inclined to guess," returned Rushbrook, pointing to the shadows opposite. Lucy had moved, and now her shoulder cast its graceful outline on the wall below the stooping figure of Hemprigge. "Yet if it be so, it only buries the mystery deeper. Hemprigge parting with his money for charity's sake is odd enough, but his doing it in the idea of winning a portionless bride seems the very madness of extravagance."

"Lucy dream of marrying that man!" Maude burst out savagely, all her old hatred of him returning; "that would be wilder extravagance still, Lord Rushbrook. Believe me he never had the insolence to dream of such a thing; it would be sacrilege—profanity."

"Sacrilege and profanity: each and both of them, very likely," assented Rushbrook. "But in the eyes of that world we were talking of, the offer would be far from a bad one, and Hemprigge is not likely to set a lower value on himself than other people."

In an indifferent case, and before she had lived with Lucy and been lost in the clouds with Rushbrook, Maude most likely would have inclined to agree with the world and Mr. Hemprigge. Now she had begun to learn that there were things too holy to be made matter of merchandise.

She rose, and in the impulse of her indignation, prepared to sweep into the other room, but Rushbrook gently laid a finger on her arm.

"Take my word for it, you may leave our friend to Miss Winter. So long as she suspects nothing, there is no harm done; should he come to speak out, she will answer to the same purpose as you, although, perhaps, in milder terms. And if I might dare to counsel you, do nothing more than get rid of his benevolent co-operation and discourage his visits. When he sees the one and the other to be useless, rely upon it he will discontinue both. You need have no fear of a scene, for Hemprigge is the last man to court one, yet anything approaching it would be disagreeable to you, vex Sir Basil, perhaps hurt Hugh, and certainly pain Miss Winter. If you think differently, or can't answer for your feelings, let me

charge myself with the delicate commission of dealing with him, and I will do my best to manage it so as to atone for any mischief I may have made. Hush! Here comes the philanthropist at last to verify the old proverb."

All this time Mr. Hemprigge had been far too deeply engrossed in conversation of his own to trouble himself as to whether he was the subject of talk to others. He had been almost inclined to see a providence in the unexpected opportunity that had been made for him; yet he found it less easy than he could have supposed to use it, although his mind had been made up long before, his line of country surveyed, and his very speech prepared. Time pressed, for although Sir Basil was not likely to awake, or Mr. Purkiss to reappear, Maude might call Lucy to her side at any moment: yet as any abruptness on his part was almost certain to drive Lucy to take refuge with Maude, prudence and sophistry conspired to confirm his irresolution, and he began to fence and feint before delivering the assault, feeling bitterly all the time how fast the precious seconds were flying. He mounted on his old stalking-horse of philanthropy, but in his abstraction, what with snatches at its mouth and kicks in its ribs, the paces of the familiar animal became so spasmodic and eccentric, that Lucy, instead of being soothed to confidence, as she was intended to be, regarded the rider with surprise and some uneasiness. Had he been a shy man she really cared for, nothing could have served his purpose better; as it was, he saw with displeasure and disgust he was only startling her and putting her on the defensive. No man in his circumstances ever felt more certain he was rushing foolishly on his fate; but with a view to that future ease of his conscience we referred to before, he clung to his pet principle of exhausting every possible chance before resigning himself to failure as inevitable. Lucy from time to time kept glancing round at his face in a sort of curious fascination, cowering down in the intervals over the photographs scattered before her, like a scared pigeon ready to take flight at the first rude movement that should break the charm. With all her motherly interest in the clerks' orphans, it is to be feared she would have consented to a grave compromise of their interests, could she only have shaken off the earnest little gentleman at her elbow.

"Oh, no! Mr. Hemprigge, we could never dream of such a thing. We have given you far too much trouble as it is," she answered in random acknowledgment of some reckless proposal of her admirer's.

"You havé, indeed, given me much trouble, Miss Winter, more than you know of," he broke out desperately, tenderly lowering his tone and glancing apprehensively at Sir Basil. "Your image has haunted me through many an anxious day and sleepless night; you have filled my sleeping and my waking thoughts, and you have——" and heaven knows how high or far his studied eloquence might have carried him, now that it was fairly wound up and going. But Lucy stared in his face with such candid fright, not to say horror, that he broke down in spite of himself

and came to a dead pause. The father of the orphan, the Hemprigge of the gentle heart and open hand, the much misunderstood philanthropist had vanished, and she was at bay before her old bugbear, with the looks she had shrunk from, speaking out boldly instead of whispering,—the admiration she had shuddered at in suspecting it, was actually avowed and outraging her.

"Hear me to the end!" he said, struggling with his rising fierceness, for in truth he hated her at the moment, and the storm of wounded pride and disappointment that had broken out within might have made a man of his self-control forget time and place, and yield to a wild outburst of passion. He mastered himself so far, but with evil eyes and set teeth he pled his cause in humble moving words, and his hissing voice tuned itself, as he spoke, into the whine of the professional mendicant run into operatic music by Offenbach.

With it all, had his face and his first tones not been a revelation, Lucy might have been touched. As it was, she was moved indeed, although very differently, and in her terror and aversion found it hard to check the impulse to rush to Sir Basil and claim his protection. She managed somehow, however, to give Hemprigge the answer he expected, and assuredly if he wanted his conscience made easy on the score of possible mistakes, her manner ought to have given him as effectual satisfaction as he could have desired.

He would have given much to have closed the interview with a few friendly words, but for the life of him could not help paying her an instalment of revenge in exchange for the involuntarily honest expression of her countenance; he could not resist leaving with the lady of his longings a *souvenir* that should rankle in her gentle heart. If she repaid his love with hate, he would assure himself, at all events, a sympathy of suffering.

"Don't think you can delude me, as, perhaps, you do yourself, Miss Winter. I know what and who it is that stands between us; perhaps it might be better for all three if I did not!"

"I only understand this much, sir, that you intend me gross insult and outrage. I ought to have looked for nothing else at your hands!" returned Lucy, rising to her feet, flushing indignantly, and then becoming very pale.

Hemprigge's passion for once had fairly got the better of him, but the prudence he had so long practised and so devoutly worshipped, came to his help at last, although rather late. He had grown almost as white as Lucy, as he thought of the personal consequences of the warm-tempered Lord Rushbrook becoming the young lady's champion, and as Sir Basil moved in his chair, he was reminded of all the remoter contingencies this idle *imbroglio* might involve him in. Had her indignation breathed the sweetest hopes to him, it could not have soothed him more suddenly. There was a gentle melancholy in his speech that should have woken an echo of pity in the breast of a saintly inquisitor or Indian brave. Yet Lucy listened to it implacably, although it brought her a certain comfort

in telling her the echoes of the storm were dying away and clearing the air for the moment.

"I leave you, Miss Winter; and more agonizing even than the blow you deal me will be the feeling that the madness of my love has ruined me, and irretrievably, perhaps, in your good opinion. The pangs of my remorse might deserve your pardon in time, but never, never shall I forget my fault or forgive myself." His ringed fingers swept his delicate cambric handkerchief over his fine eyes: it was not for nothing he had sat in theatre stalls at the feet of our cleverest actors. An intelligent man is always picking up something even in the midst of his pleasures; only novices when they first tread the boards generally sin on the side of extravagance.

He discreetly withdrew himself, expanded his features, straitened his person, and strutted into the other room. Although something paler than usual, he looked very much himself when he entered it. Had he been able to read in Maude's heart, or in Rushbrook's indeed, perhaps on the whole he would rather have prolonged his *tête-a-tête* with Lucy; but Rushbrook, a man of the world like himself, put a force on his feelings, and chivalrously thrust himself forward to bear the brunt of the onset. He did not pretend cordiality, and showed nothing of his usual light and rallying manner: an unpleasant sign, as Hemprigge's shrewdness told him. He simply talked easily and loudly till he woke Sir Basil, and Purkiss descended on the scene. Hemprigge, on his side, did his best, but Maude's silence and coldness could not have escaped him, even had he not intercepted the looks that passed between her and Lucy. After all, what did it signify now? They only waited his going to exchange confidences as well; that evening's work he knew had shaken for once and for ever the footing he had made himself with so much pains at "The Cedars." He took his leave as soon as he decently could, and had scarcely the patience to communicate to his importunate friend Purkiss, who followed him out on the gravel, the evil end of all his manœuvring. Of one thing he had assured himself, that he owed Rushbrook something more for friendly offices, and he made a mental memorandum of the debt, to be paid off among others, when friendly fate should send him the means of a general settlement with his creditors.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

AND SUFFERS ACCORDINGLY.

THE shock of his disappointment over, as might have been expected in a man of his eminently practical turn of mind, Mr. Hemprigge sought comfort in labour, and in his blighted love fell back on what served him for religion. He had the heartfelt conviction that nothing is so satisfying as gold, so long, at least, as you go on winning it; that there are no plasters like bank-notes for bleeding hearts, and the higher their figures

the more sovereign the specific. Laying bare to Purkiss Childersleigh his motives for the match he aspired to, he had taken care to vindicate the consistency of his principles, and had soothed any twinges of his conscience, by professing to court in the portionless Lucy the embodiment of connection and extended credit. Yet, after all, a man trained as he had been, in a class that believed in little but tangible profits and quick returns, must have resigned himself with some misgiving to the guidance of broader views at so critical a turning-point of his career as matrimony. To lock up his heart in unnegotiable securities, to fetter his hand till death should knock off the handcuffs, and without receiving the solid dowry that should carry conviction of the prudence of the proceedings, was a grave step indeed ; one that could hardly fail to be fruitful of anxieties and misgivings. Rejected by Lucy, he was a free agent again, and one would have said the very man to console himself with the proverb that there were better fish in the sea than had ever come out of it. Yet any one in his secrets—Hooker, for instance—would have said his conduct was that of the timid gambler, who, seeing the heavy stake he thought himself on the point of winning slip through his fingers, should of a sudden change his nature and take to the most reckless play with what remained to him of his own.

Hempigge, to all seeming, was assiduous as ever in the affairs of the Crédit Foncier, but he no longer concentrated his joys on the profits he netted in that establishment, or bounded his hopes with its horizon. Lothbury is in the immediate vicinity of the Stock markets, and he relaxed from his more strictly professional work, in brief intervals, when he was wont to make stealthy dashes into his brokers' chambers in Throgmorton Street. He came to engross the lion's share of the time and thoughts of Messrs. Sharpe and Merryleg, who enlisted themselves heart and soul as jackals in ordinary to his majesty. That is to say, instead of waiting, in the constrained etiquette of their brethren of the older school, for clients to come to them with instructions for legitimate investments, they made it their business to prowl the Stock Exchange and its purlieus, sniffing up tainted intelligence, and hunting out shreds and scraps of secret information from dark and dirty corners. They were great in advising on time-bargains,—the buying stock you have no idea of holding on the chance of selling it at a profit a little later ; or the selling what you do not possess in the prospect of being able to pick it up at lower prices when the day comes for fulfilling your contract. Time-bargaining is evidently a taste addressing itself very strongly to cupidity, the love of excitement, and all the springs of individual happiness and national greatness. Moreover, like dram-drinking, bric-a-brac hunting, and opium-smoking, it is a liking that grows with the indulgence. If you lose, the chances are you persevere to retrieve your losses, each step plunging you deeper in the holding clay, and making your extrication more hopeless ; if you win, from that hour, of course, it is all over with you.

Hempigge began winning, and went on winning largely. Things in

general were still on the rise, although not altogether so buoyant as they had been. If you only stuck by the time-honoured rule of the Stock Exchange, and distributed your eggs in a multiplicity of baskets—the rule that made such wild work later with the votaries of limited liability—you were pretty sure to find most of the brittle ware delivered safe on settling-day, and the breakages were but a small per-cent of the profits. Hemprigge was a shrewd judge of securities himself; and his advisers, although short-sighted like most of their fraternity, could yet look pretty sharply into the future for ten days or a fortnight in advance. Moreover, his position took him naturally a good deal behind the scenes; supplied him the means of bartering valuable information, and he generally had in reserve a number of insecurities absolutely safe to him because "meant" to rise. With his accustomed modesty, he sought to conceal this new source of gain from his colleagues, and in especial from Childersleigh. Sharpe and Merryleg were warned to silence, and bound to it by their interest; and as his transactions extended and multiplied themselves, Hemprigge took to conducting them through different sets of brokers, by the intervention of the faithful Hooker.

"I don't like it, I tell you. It's a clear tempting of Providence. You've got hold of one first-rate thing; why not stick to it instead of going and burning your fingers with irons you know little or nothing of?" So spake that venerable minister when first consulted. "It's like a thimblerigger playing at another man's table," he added, with much more truth than civility.

But Hemprigge, with the wisdom of the serpent, wasted no breath in convincing him. He simply drew a memorandum-book from his pocket, and submitted for his inspection some of its eloquent little pages. As Hooker read, his eyes lighted as Ali Baba's may have done when he stumbled on the treasure of the forty thieves, and his conversion was absolute and instantaneous. Thenceforth he not only patted his enterprising friend on the back, but insisted in sharing his ventures, expatiating with rare fluency on the beauty of the alchemy which could turn breath to gold, and make a simple order to a broker yield a rich return. Indeed he became almost officiously zealous in transmitting to his partner and principal the information he made it his daily business to gather from the brokers. He still, for prudential reasons, denied himself the entrance of the establishment in Lothbury, contenting himself with standing fondly at gaze from the corner of the Bank, and indulging in his mental raptures at that respectful distance. But the liveried giant by the portals came to know the look of his wafered despatches, and to curse their frequency, and the lighter Mercuries of the establishment were always flying with them up the broad carpeted staircase that led to the room of the Managing Director:

"Immediate and confidential. 11.15 A.M.

"M. and S. assure me Sallymanky's people selling Spanish. Rumours of new loan coming out in Paris . . . H."

Naturally Mr. Hooker's education had been thoroughly British, and he frequently tripped himself up in the intricacies of those foreign names he had come in contact with, late in life.

"*Immediate.* 12.25 P.M.

"Queensland Acclimatation landed a herd of Alpakkas; all well. Telegraph from Moreton Bay—No one believes it yet, but shares hardening. J. B. & Co. knows it to be true."

And so on with news and rumours of news; tales of war and peace; payment or non-payment of accruing dividends; company concessions and colonial bankruptcies: three-fourths of them *canards*, it is true, but most of them winged to answer their purpose, and hold their flight over next settling-day. Hooker and Hemprigge were growing wealthy, but their very good fortune became their stumbling-block, and their riches ruined them. They were creating capital so fast—capital they had so little call for in their easy way of trade—that the question as to how they were to dispose of it gradually became more pressing. Amidst all his gripping and getting, Hooker's essential prudence whispered him wisely:

"It's no use leaving all this money we're getting, only to fatten our bankers. I'll tell you what it is—I'm for putting it out of the way against a rainy day; for running it off into a sort of reserve fund. What do you say to houses now, or land in the suburbs?"

"What do I say? why, that the time may come for that late, when things get fishy, when some of these queer concerns in the City begin to look shaky. But there's not a sign of it as yet, and I'm not going to bury my money away in the earth, or build it into houses, so long as I can have eight per cent. on rising shares at selling prices."

"You are going to sink more of it in the Crédit Foncier of Turkey then?"

"Bother the Crédit Foncier of Turkey. No; most certainly not. On the contrary, while its shares are so high, I mean to follow the Governor's example, sell; and if you take my advice, you'll do the same, as I recommended you once before. In fact, I begin to doubt if it's worth my while sacrificing all my time to it for my paltry salary. Look at that robber Childersleigh pocketing commissions for himself, and the whole Board as well,—and if I do leave it ——"

"Leave it! nonsense. Salaries like yours are not to be had for the asking."

"Well, that's not the question now. At all events, its shares have moved very little in the last two months, while others have been steadily on the rise. The Suburban Discount for instance: they talk of its declaring a fifty per cent. dividend at the next meeting—perhaps a bonus."

"It might be the best thing we could do to shift about a little, if we were very sure of our ground," assented Hooker; and the result of this conversation, and subsequent ones, was the embarkation of the realized capital of the allies on board a variety of craft, with top-hamper out of all proportion to the ballast, as no one knew better than Hemprigge.

But then he believed in his luck ; and what is a still more common thing with speculators of his class, he overrated his nerve and resolution. For avarice and superstition lie at the root of all speculation, and make it the hardest thing in the world to argue yourself into an absolute sacrifice, or to confess to a broken vein of luck. Hemprigge had invested pretty freely in the Suburban Discount; the rather that Rifler, the Manager, was an intimate of his own. But, on a memorable morning, one of the Crédit Foncier messengers came skimming along the corridor, bearing one of Hooker's most pressing despatches.

"Suburbans falling. That villain Rifler bolted, they say—see me at once. Not a moment to be lost."

Hemprigge opened and read it, standing with his face to the window, and then set himself steadily to disbelieve it. An untoward incident like this was so utterly out of all his fortunate experience. Keeping a keen look-out, he had seen no immediate symptoms of impending commercial convulsion, and as for the Suburban Discount, he had gone over all its books and accounts most carefully with his friend Rifler. He breathed between his teeth a fearful anathema at that gentleman—provisionally—and then turning to the clerk, who had been writing to his dictation when the missive arrived, said, very quietly,—

"Just have the goodness, Mr. Driver, to go on with those letters and have them ready for me to sign; should any one ask for me, say I have been called out for half-an-hour on official business;" then picking up his hat and gloves, he walked out of the room. But in the comparative gloom of the corridor, a cloud settled on his spirits, he felt rather less sanguine, and, trying in vain to stifle the whisper of superstition that told him his luck was on the turn, viciously tore one of his gloves to shreds, and walked past the porter with a pleasant smile and most unconcerned demeanour.

But Hooker's information was at least as accurate as usual. Rifler, while confiding his company's secrets and baring his own bosom to his boon companion Hemprigge, had already feathered himself a snug nest in Sweden with down stripped from the shareholders of the Suburban. To elude all suspicion, he had taken a week's holiday and a passage under a feigned name, and the Hull and Stockholm steamer *Odin* had carried him beyond the reach of inconvenient extradition treaties. Now he was domesticated with his English billiard-table, groom and gamekeeper, and his French cook, in a spacious mansion on Lake Wener. Rifler had always had a distaste for society and a passion for wild-fowl shooting, and it had only been a "mucker" on the Leger and his uncle the chairman that had forced him on the Suburban. When Hemprigge stood between the swing-doors opening on the Stock Exchange from New Court, the 10*l.* shares of that Company, selling at 47 the evening before, had already dropped 14, and were steadily declining. Yet the alarm had scarcely spread westwards to St. James's Street, and never touched the country.

"Most unfortunate ! Who could have dreamed it ? But sell at once, of

course, and have done with it, Mr. Hemprigge," gasped Merryleg, who came trotting up to him.

"Sell, of course," echoed Hemprigge's common sense, and had he only listened to it, the 2,000*l.* he must have sacrificed would have been the most profitable outlay he ever made in his life. "Those fellows are always hankering after their commissions," whispered Avarice; "the Company is sound, their loss is discounted, hold on for a rally." Had he made up his mind to that first step backwards, which would have cost—certainly cost 2,000*l.*—and then withdrawn quietly in the same prudent direction, cutting loose from everything suspicious, and falling back on Consols, or even the Crédit Foncier and Mobilier of Turkey, the defaulting Rifler would have proved the best friend he ever knew. But, listening to the tempter, he held on, and doing so, entered on a fatal line of policy where the descent was easy and the recovery hard; took up the hammer that was to nail the colours he should have struck, and struck the match that was to fire the magazine. And Hooker, with the inward spasms of a careful servant who once carried his quarterly earnings to a savings' bank, and in much mental agony, was persuaded to follow his leader.

The momentous decision of the morning made both of them miserable men. So long as all goes well, the fever of speculation is a delicious glow, one of the most agreeable excitements in the world; but the shuddering-fits that follow a reaction chill your very marrow, as you sit Marius-like among your crumbling investments, musing remorsefully over losses and mistakes, looking wistfully back at past prosperity, and labouring in vain to readjust the scales of unsatisfactory balances. The savage shareholders of the Suburban altogether declined to let Rifler carry off the sins of the Board into the wilds of Sweden; held an indignation meeting, when they sent the Directors packing after their would-be scapegoat, replaced them with distinguished members of their own body, and these new brooms, despairing of cleansing this Augean stable, threw up their hands in despair and let all the world into its foul secrets. Confidence once disturbed, tore rents in the balloon of credit that gradually enlarged themselves; other Companies began to get talked about; and the Bank of England sounded the alarm from its parlour, and raising its rate of discount week after week, shook the foundations of the mushroom establishments that had been underselling it and luring its customers. Lord Richborough and the dignitaries of Lombard Street began to crow, and, with their cheery "I told you so!" volunteered Job's consolation to the more advanced and embarrassed speculators of their acquaintance.

The Crédit Foncier and Mobilier of Turkey did not go altogether unscathed, and Hugh Childersleigh had begun to have his anxieties as well as Hemprigge. The rise in the shares was checked, and then they began to sink a little in sympathy with other Companies. His faith in its ultimate prospects was not shaken for an instant, but he congratulated himself, in his special circumstances, that he had been wise in time, and reduced his great holding when markets were at their best. Yet now the

policy of candour began to bear its fruits, and Hemprigge's early predictions to fulfil themselves. People who shook their heads incredulously at most things of the sort, continued to place some faith in the ample reports and lucid balance-sheets of the Crédit Foncier of Turkey. The shareholders still were always welcomed there, to find the Directors more affable and communicative than ever. Its transactions, moreover, had been, on the whole, so prudently conducted, it had engaged its credit so intelligently, had made its advances on such prudent margins of security, that by comparison at least it only gained by publicity. While some of its rivals were left with none but their profitless customers on their hands, with the sad option of closing their doors or throwing good money after bad, its connection actually increased. But, for the moment, dearer money and shaken faith dealt a heavy blow to the system of reckless financing, and it seemed likely next half-year would see a woeful melting of those commissions Hemprigge had grudged so to the Governor.

"Do you propose taking up that *Pera Lighting and Drainage*, Mr. Childersleigh?" asked Hemprigge one morning, when he had come to the Governor's room for the formal discussion of the business of the day. Although they worked about as harmoniously as a pair of spaniels hunting the covers in couples, yet their common duties forced them to lay their heads together once at least in the twenty-four hours.

"Certainly not, so far as I have a voice in the matter."

"It would be an excellent thing for you," returned Hemprigge, with the most innocent of faces, resting a slight emphasis on the last word—an emphasis that did not escape the other. For some time past he had carefully avoided any more direct allusion to Hugh's match with time, and the forthcoming opening of the will.

Hugh affected to take no notice of the intimation that separated his interests from the Company's. He had learned to control his temper up to a certain point, which the other guessed at, and usually, in his prudence, took good care not to pass.

"Nothing that locks up the capital we must keep at call can possibly be a good thing in these times. At present, and as long as I can influence the action of the Board, I shall set myself against any commitments of the kind."

"The labourer is worthy of his hire," rejoined Hemprigge mildly. "Your bare salary, without these magnificent commissions you have been drawing, would be miserable remuneration for the time and services of a man like you."

Hugh looked at him in a way that told him he had gone dangerously far. So long as the Governor restrained himself from giving his feelings vent in speech, it was quite immaterial how much of them his face expressed. Now-a-days there was little room for secrets between the two.

"You need not tell me that many men in my place, and in yours"—(he paid back the insulting accent on the pronoun)—"go on the principle

of *après nous le déluge*. If the flood is to come, and I think it highly probable, I don't intend the shareholders shall be swamped if I can save them. To remind you of your words when we first broached the scheme, I mean it to outlast both of us."

"To outlast me, I don't doubt, if you had your will, my friend," thought Hemprigge. "A great deal has passed since then, Mr. Childersleigh," he said aloud with a sigh, "and I am sure the shareholders ought to rely absolutely on your prudence and forethought. By the way, though, talking of that and the deluge, I hear some of them grumbling about your building an ark for yourself, saying, that if the Governor is selling his shares, it's time for them to be taking to the boats."

"My parting with some of my shares was done openly and above-board. To my colleagues I made no secret of my reasons, and how honest these were you know better than any one, if you choose to say. Certainly, as it has turned out, it was a good thing I sold when I did, but as much so for the shareholders as for myself. If the Governor were compelled to sell in the times I fear next summer, it would be casting our credit to the dogs, and our stock to the bears!"

"Oh, don't think I have any doubt you acted for the best, Mr. Childersleigh; but the shareholders are not so deep in your secrets, and talk they will. They say the bears are sniffing at the property already, and all owing to those unlucky sales of yours. I tell them they have really no cause of complaint; that every man has a perfect right to do what he will with his own; that even a Governor, however much he may have drawn from an association like this, need hold nothing more in it than his legal stake. But I cannot boast of having convinced them, and I thought it my duty to tell you so."

"Thank you. I shall take the needful steps to disabuse them of their erroneous impressions. And forgive me, but as your line of defence seems hardly so well chosen as it was undoubtedly well intended, may I ask you to be silent on the subject in future?—otherwise I should be under the necessity of appealing from your unfortunate advocacy to the Board, perhaps even to a general meeting of the Company. Moreover, as what you tell me strongly increases my feeling of personal responsibility, I shall look in future to be consulted on all transactions, even the most trivial; and as that, I believe, disposes of our business, I'll return, if you will allow me, to the correspondence you interrupted."

The speech sounded more like a defiance to open war than anything Hemprigge had heard from him. The imperious tone, still more the harsh order about the reference of everything to the Governor, hurt his pride, and perhaps it interfered with his arrangements as well as trenching on his prerogative as Manager. For the moment he felt inclined to accept it as a challenge, and fight the battle out, when the standing-ground was tolerably good. But second thoughts brought safer counsel. It was a dangerous thing engaging such an adversary on a doubtful chance of victory; for now that Hemprigge was getting worked in among

the complex wheels he had set in motion in the City, he held with a desperate tenacity by the Crédit Foncier of Turkey, and would have regarded his dismissal from the post of Managing Director as a crowning calamity. So he thought better of it, and turned quickly to leave the room, certainly not hating Hugh more than when he entered it, but with much strengthened conviction that, sooner or later, one or both of them must go to the wall.

CHAPTER XXIX.

LUCY MAKES A SCENE, AND MAUDE A DISCOVERY.

No one can be infidel enough to doubt that ladies whose unlucky lot it is to reject the affections they have won, feel all the sympathy they profess for the sufferings of which they have been the cause. Yet with its regrets and remorse, it is not in the most angelic feminine nature to be insensible to the glory of involuntary triumphs ; to think, without some thrill of pleasure, on the sorrows of its victims. There are women, of course, who hunt down hearts for the sheer pleasure of the sport, and parade their bruised and bleeding trophies as a veteran Indian carries at his belt the scalps he has torn away in a score of razzias. We suspect there are few of the sex who can resist gratifying a pardonable vanity by taking some one into the secret of the tribute paid their fascinations ; who have the strength of kindness to do the best they can for their lover next to accepting him, and consign to oblivion the episode he unpleasantly figured in. Unless an offer be so wild as to amount to an insult, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, the gentleman may find comfort in thinking he has left pleasant memories with the lady to whose happiness he would have consecrated his life. But surely Lucy Winter had singular ill-luck. If some generous fairy had dowered her at her christening with a rare gift of fascination, a malevolent one must have crossed the boon, willing that the attachments she inspired should end in nothing but bitterness to all concerned. If poor George Childers-leigh's unhappy love threatened to cost her the pleasant home she had banished him from, and the friends who had come to her aid in the hour of her desertion, Mr. Hemprigge's proposal left her a prey to devouring anxieties about the man she insisted on regarding as her earliest benefactor. That prudent gentleman, who valued more than any one the beauties of a meek temper and long-suffering spirit, would have deplored even more than he did his foolish outbreak of anger, had he foreseen how deeply it would impress his lady-love. Lucy could not forget the malignant virulence of his covert threats, and was haunted, sleeping and waking, by the look which accompanied them. It was no passing fit of passion she was assured ; she never, for an instant, doubted his

earnest sincerity of purpose, nor did she in the least question his capacity in heart, brain, or conscience to plan and carry through a revenge. The suddenness with which he had changed his language and calmed his manner terrified her, and she shuddered after him as at a rattle-snake who had sprung his rattle and then glided silently off on an errand of mischief. Although she had told Maude all else that had passed between them, she had said nothing of the words that were fretting in her mind. She blushed even to herself when she recalled them, and moreover she guessed at something of Maude's old relations with Hugh. She brooded over the word till they wore her spirits; her health and much of her old gaiety had gone with George Childersleigh, and now Hemprigge had plunged her in absolute gloom. Maude rallied and petted her by turns, tried to cheer, coax, and question her, all in vain, became hurt at last, and had her fits of coldness, although they never lasted long. Her penetration told her her friend had a secret she refused to share.

The struggle in Lucy's mind grew harder and harder. Hugh Childersleigh, she knew well, had bent his powers and devoted his life to a single aim, renouncing for it pleasure and society and political ambition. A few months more must decide his success or failure. She scarcely sympathized with him as she wished, yet she would have made any sacrifices to help him. Now accident had offered her the occasion. She had learned there was a man at his elbow, and deep in his confidence, who asked nothing better than to thwart him, and assuredly would do it if he had the chance. From what Maude had told her of Rushbrook's talk, she was aware, indeed, the Governor had not so high an opinion of the Managing Director as she might otherwise have believed, but that was very different from knowing him for his secret enemy. In the candour and purity of her nature she knew little of the essential oil of hypocrisy that keeps the wheels of the world in working order, and would never have persuaded herself a man she admired, as Childersleigh, could live in outwardly amicable intercourse with any one he had reason to suspect and distrust. Yes, the more she thought it over, the more was she driven up to the conclusion, that duty, to say nothing of friendship or common gratitude, made it imperative she should warn Childersleigh; that the thing must be gone through with, and each day she delayed it a crime, and, perhaps, an irreparable one. And now he came so rarely to the house that there seemed nothing for it but to write. She would set herself to the task with the conscientious resolution of a martyr; then her courage would ooze away, and each succeeding failure make the ordeal more difficult. The touch of the pen covered her face with blushes, and set her pulses beating as if they would burst her temples; her ideas went whirling round her brain, and down went the pen again in sheer despair. For she knew her warning would be idle unless she gave Childersleigh convincing proof of the deep-rooted inveteracy of his enemy. How persuade him of that without

telling him more than she would have cared to tell a mother, not only the offer—that was matter of indifference to her—but why his own name should have been brought up between them at all?

While the conflict was at its worst, the announcement that Hugh was coming to dine with them in a day or two gave her a reprieve. She tried to persuade herself she would tread the delicate ground much more safely when talking to him face to face, ready to advance or retreat, and in the meantime she found comparative repose. But she passed the afternoon of the dreadful day as the criminal who counts the minutes to a shameful punishment, and took her seat at dinner like a guest who had been fetched from the torture-chamber to be dressed for the banquet. Her eyes lighted up with fever, and a hot spot burned on each of her pale cheeks. Maude had taken fright and done her best to persuade her to keep her room. Even Sir Basil, not usually very observant, remarked her appearance, and said kindly, "Lucy, my dear, how wretchedly ill you are looking. Have a glass of wine? Here, Barnes, a glass of sherry to Miss Winter instantly; or stay, she likes Madeira. Go down for a bottle of March's East Indian."

Purkiss himself said something civil, and, perhaps, meant it; and it was with ill-concealed anxiety that Hugh, who had kept his eyes on her ever since he seated himself opposite, exclaimed:

"Is it wise in you to be here at all, Miss Winter? I wish we could prevail on you to leave us."

Lucy smiled faintly, just managed to say she did not feel very well, and then rising hastily beat a speedy retreat. Maude followed, but only to have her affectionate inquiries parried with kisses, thanks, and generalities about headaches; so she reluctantly left her friend to the care of the maid, and returned downstairs thoughtful and much perturbed.

"Nothing very serious the matter, is there, Maude?" asked Sir Basil. "She certainly seems very far from well."

"She insists it's only a headache, but I don't like it. It's quite a new thing her having headaches at all, and she has been looking miserable for the last fortnight. However, I have ordered her to bed, which is the best thing for her in the meantime; and I've threatened her with the doctor, if she is not better before night."

"I should send for him in any case," said Hugh gravely.

"You don't think her seriously ill?"

"I do, indeed, or at least that she will be if she is not looked to forthwith. There is no mistaking the symptoms of fever. It needs no doctor to foretell a violent attack if something is not done."

"God bless me!" exclaimed Sir Basil; "do you really think so? Here, Barnes"—he went on, turning to the butler—"send a groom over with my compliments to Dr. Selby, and beg him to come without a moment's delay. What, you're going upstairs again, are you, Maude? Quite right, quite right; say I've sent for the doctor, and see that she keeps herself quiet till he comes."

The three gentlemen made a very silent meal. Hugh was taciturn, and eat as little as he said; and Sir Basil quiet and anxious, although his anxiety did not impair his appetite. As for Purkiss, his feelings were not sufficiently tried to tax his philosophy, and he disposed of the successive dishes, from the soup to the olives, in his usual methodical and business-like manner.

Lucy had gone to bed, but not to rest or sleep. She was in an agony of remorse that she should have let this chance, too, slip through her fingers; that, instead of managing quietly, she should have made a scene, and that her task was become more difficult than ever. But in her despair, she so far overcame her repugnance, that she resolved to have done with concealment the moment she regained her strength and collected her ideas. When Maude came up, and establishing herself by her pillow, told her how thoroughly she had alarmed them all downstairs; that the doctor was actually sent for, and might be with them at any moment; she shut her eyes, and took the plunge.

"It is you, and not Dr. Selby, who can help me, Maude," she burst out; and then with confused excuses and broken sentences, that were still intelligible enough, she whispered in her friend's ear all she had omitted from her former story.

"But why on earth make a mystery of all this from me at least, you foolish child?" exclaimed Maude. "As if it had been you, and not that wretch who had done something to be ashamed of." Then she stopped, smiled, blushed at an idea that seemed to shoot across her brain, and ending by looking thoughtfully at Lucy.

"Well, the first thing to be done," she resumed after a time, "is to lift off your mind all this weight that has been crushing it so long and so unnecessarily; but it only serves you right for having any secrets from me. Besides, although I daresay Hugh Childerleigh knows this man better than you suppose, I quite feel that, for the ease of your own conscience, we must send him a warning. If you like to trust me, I'll charge myself with the explanation, and make it to-night."

"Yes, that will be best. But now that my folly has attached so much importance to it, what can he think?"

"The worst he can think is,—that Mr. Hemprigge was outrageously insolent, and you absurdly sensitive. You may trust yourself to me, as you ought to know, although it would seem you had forgotten it. At least, I shall have all my wits about me, which is more than I should answer for you; and in the meantime, I shall answer for your cure, and spare you with the doctor and his cross-examination."

Maude had no difficulty in finding the opportunity she sought for. Unlike Sir Basil, Hugh appeared by no means satisfied with the bare assurance that the invalid was so much better that the doctor might be countermanded.

"I wish I saw you more alarmed, Maude. I can quite understand it is one of those nervous illnesses people are slow to confess to; but

surely it would be wiser to be on the safe side, and have Selby to see her."

"I should think so, I assure you, were I not certain Lucy was round the corner, and in the fair way to convalescence. She has confided to me her complaint. I pledge myself to set it all to rights; and I hope you don't doubt my word or skill. But you have reason to be uneasy about her, as you are the cause of it all."

"Forgive me, Maude, but the matter is too serious for trifling. And how can I possibly have anything to do with Miss Winter's illness?"

At the same time his heart fluttered a little, and with all his unfeigned concern not altogether unpleasantly.

"You directly, and indirectly your friend Hemprigge. I can hardly forgive you, Hugh, for ever bringing that man here. However, I daresay you have more cause than any of us to regret making his acquaintance, so I shall say no more about that. He hates you, Hugh; and that is what Lucy found out, and the foolish child has been frightening herself to death about it ever since."

"I have long known he does not like me. But how should Miss Winter come to guess it? and why should she have hesitated to tell me, if she had interest enough in me to induce her to take the matter to heart at all?"

"She had it from his own lips and looks. Oh, she has told me all: so you may believe me, if there is anything in his enmity to alarm you, there is good ground for alarm."

"If Miss Winter is intimate enough with Mr. Hemprigge to share his inmost secrets, I must say I think she is bound to keep them to herself," rejoined Hugh gloomily.

Maude began to appreciate Mr. Hemprigge's perspicacity, and to fear that, on the whole, although placed in an awkward dilemma, she could serve her friend better by over-candour than excess of caution.

"Don't start at shadows, Hugh. You know, as well as I do, there can be nothing whatever in common between the two. It is sullying Lucy to name her in the same breath with him. If he forgot himself, it was because she showed her disgust only too frankly."

Hugh muttered something between his teeth, and his brow got dark.

"It seems he has had the audacity to admire her for long, and the other evening —"

"Stop, Maude. It is very clear Miss Winter would have given much to keep all this to herself, and it cost her bitterly to unbosom herself, even to you. You must see it would be the grossest indelicacy and ingratitude were I to add to her pain by intruding on her secrets, or listening to what I have no right to hear. Tell her what you please. Say I asked no questions, and desired to know nothing more than you chose to tell me. Only, whatever you say, do not let her think her warning was a needless one, and that she has gone through all this misery

for nothing. Say everything in the way of thanks, and above all assure her I shall keep myself on my guard."

" You are noble and considerate, as you always were, Hugh," said Maude, reaching out her hand to him. " At least, Mr. Hemprigge has not spoiled you."

" Noble, do you say, and living in friendly intercourse with him, and in this business he helped me to! As for him, he shall repent this the longest day —"

" Stay, Hugh. I don't say it for your own sake, but for Lucy's—you must not make a quarrel of this. He is quick to suspect and put things together. We know his malice, and you both may have cause to dread his tongue. Reptiles are hard to crush; and he might do some one a mischief that nothing could repair."

That argument seemed to strike Hugh, and stagger him.

" Then," she went on jesuitically, " remember, although he did lose his temper, and spoke as only a coarse-minded man could speak, it was under excessively mortifying circumstances; and if he was atrociously impertinent, he apologized promptly and amply. So far as that goes, Lucy ought to be silent, and you could only do her an injury by putting yourself forward as her champion. If you have anything to resent, it is his expression of animosity towards yourself."

" As for that, he may do his worst. I defy him to hurt me, and were ours ordinary business relations, I should be content to go on meeting him on the distant footing I have banished him to, and continue to tolerate him as I have done. But we were friends in a fashion once: I blush to remember it. I owe him obligations, too, although he helped me for his own ends, and hoped to use me as a cat's-paw. The business world has learned to identify us in a manner, and I often loathe my very prosperity, Maude, when I recollect it is partly of his creation. He knows well he can always sting me by reminding me of it. He has fixed me in golden fetters, and they jingle and gall me at each step I take. To think I am trifling knowingly all this time with my honour for that accursed money of Miss Childersleigh!"

The spirit of unworldliness embodied in Lucy had never rested on him so strongly, and it nerved him for the moment with the impetuous force of a Berserker. The fit was on him, and he was almost resolved to break out of Hemprigge's golden bands, to burst all the bonds old hopes and old habits had shackled him in. Had it been Lucy he had been talking with, the inspiration of her presence might have wrought him to wisdom or to madness, and the deed would have been done. Maude, with all her worldliness, had never admired him so much. Perhaps for the time being, she forgot her adventure in the fogs of Killoden, and the dreams had come of it, and remembered and regretted a morning-scene in the garden-walk at "The Cedars." But she had been brought up her father's daughter, and she felt to Lucy differently from Hugh. When it was a question of friendship, she was too conscientiously

practical to encourage any one in whose welfare she interested herself in the indulgence of sentiments, however admirable, at a price so heavy.

"Do nothing hastily, Hugh. By waiting a month or two you may spare yourself the regrets of a lifetime. The time of your probation is nearly at an end, and do not, from an overstrained sense of honour, throw lightly away all you have toiled and schemed for. No one but yourself, believe me, sees Mr. Hemprigge's fetters on your limbs. If you ever did owe him anything, he has wiped the debt out twenty times over. Remember, too, if you renounce the prize when your hand is stretched out to grasp it, you serve his antipathies and wishes beyond his hopes. No; if you mean to punish him, and I must say he richly deserves it, persevere until September, and then you are absolutely your own master to act as you please."

And the spirit of worldly wisdom having answered the promptings of the angel of unworldliness, and left her last shaft quivering in the very clout of the target, cut short the conversation with a sense of reproachful self-humiliation.

Maude was quite right in trusting much to her parting shot. Nothing short of such an argument would have held Hugh back from an open quarrel with Hemprigge, whatever the consequences to himself or his Company. He brooded over the scene between him and Lucy. His intelligence worked up Maude's hints into a tolerably faithful representation of all that had passed. As was natural, however, the more he brooded, the blacker grew the colours Hemprigge figured in, and the grosser the brutality of his language. Perhaps it might have been better for him had his delicacy been smaller, or had he suffered Maude to be more outspoken. For, in his knowledge of the world and its inmates, he would have seen that Hemprigge was not altogether the monster his heated imagination and temper pictured him, but simply what he had always suspected and long known him for—an unscrupulous, vulgar-minded, evil-tempered man, spoiled by prosperity and irritated by jealousy. But if his fancy sketches of Hemprigge, his rehearsals of his demeanour and language, roused his passions, the pathetic portraits he drew himself of Lucy unspeakably touched his heart. When his own griefs or loves inspire him, a man's art and eloquence are wonderfully self-moving and self-seductive. There, at least, there was no danger of deceiving himself; he had the materials all ready to his hand. Her shy suffering face haunted him as he had seen it last, and he could not forget it was he who had been the cause of her sorrows. He thought of her as an Andromeda chained to the rock in helpless grace and beauty; of Hemprigge as the monster who, disappointed of her and her charms, delighted himself with her tears and her terrors. In her kindness for himself—he did not call it love—she had provoked their common enemy, and with all the strength, if he cared to put it forth, he had neither the chivalry nor the courage to come to the rescue. Yet was not Maude right, and what could he do?

If he attempted to act the Perseus, his thrusts would recoil on himself, and he should only play the enemy's game. The many who envied him his great fortune guessed little of his frame of mind. Amid all his real prosperity, he told himself he was still garnering the old crops of wild oats, paying the penalties of early indiscretions, and suffering for the questionable companionship in which he had sought to extricate himself from them. He reproached himself with having wilfully closed his eyes to his ally's character, in the confidence that if he proved a rogue he could nevertheless use him with clean hands. It is not so easy, as he reflected bitterly, to work with pitch, and yet keep yourself from defilement. The man had been his tool, indeed; but even useful tools may hurt the hands that wield them. He might have been happier, he thought, had he carried the wreck of his fortunes to Nevada as he proposed, although they had been sunk there in bottomless mines or gone to enrich western swindlers. With it all he toiled harder than ever in his business, but for distraction, not from pleasure. Never before had he longed so wearily for the goal towards which he had been struggling, not because he looked to find wealth at it but liberty, and, if the truth must be told, vengeance. He who had valued money as much as most, had come to acknowledge it might be dearly come by; that in money-getting, as in fox-hunting, the pleasure or pain is in the chase, and the object worthless. Could Hemprigge have guessed the secrets of that outwardly impassive nature, he might have had the doubtful comfort of assuring himself that his malignity had made the man he detested marvellously indifferent to the winning of the great prize he had first taught him to hope for, and that, even were it won, the winning it from first to last would be mainly due to him.

While Hugh was holding his hand for fear of his blow recoiling on himself to the pleasure of his enemy, Hemprigge's ill-advised stroke at Lucy had lighted on the individual that gentleman loved so very dearly. Hugh had immense self-control, or he could not have gone on meeting the Manager as they did meet. But he called his self-control by a harsher, perhaps a juster name; and when the two had had that last interview we recorded, much more than Hemprigge's sneers, it was the feeling he was lowering himself to an equality with the man he so cordially despised, that made him hold the tone he did, and issue those embarrassing and insulting instructions. Yet really he had begun the battle, when he thought he had only shown his readiness for it, and taken the first active steps in an interchange of injuries.

Meanwhile gratitude had, at least, kept pace with resentment, and sent him the day after the dinner on an errand of inquiry to "The Cedars." The last week or two had woven him into Lucy's existence, and made him the object of her thoughts and dreams and nightmares, and it was natural he should still keep his place in these, equally natural, consequently, that she should have foreseen this attention. Certain it is, that although not much given to nursing herself, and greatly relieved in mind and restored in body, she could not be prevailed on to

leave her apartment until the visit had been announced and the visitor was gone ; that Maude, although she thought her friend quite equal to the exertion of coming downstairs, had only smiled when she refused, and not attempted to urge the point. But this painful proof that her health had been rudely shaken brought Mr. Childersleigh there again the following day, and at an hour, too, when he had never before been known to quit his business avocations for the calls of society ; Maude, glancing at her companion, when the door of the morning-room was thrown open and Mr. Childersleigh was announced, saw her start and crimson to the temples. But Mr. Childersleigh's eyes carefully avoided the invalid's face, and after the briefest and most matter-of-course inquiries, he directed his looks and conversation exclusively to Maude, and cut his stay very short indeed. Uncivil as it seemed, Lucy appeared to understand it, and actually felt more warmly to him for his neglect than she had done before for actual benefits. Had she resented it, perhaps the apologetic pressure on her hand, when he took his leave, would have made his peace. As for Maude, she had been studying lately under a tutor of her own, but even without the deepening flush on Lucy's face, she would have been just as certain of the pressure as if she had felt it. She looked on in demure silence, and *che sarà, sarà*, was her philosophical reflection. Strong and sensible as her character was, it had its weaknesses ; and partial friendship and sympathetic feelings were beginning to demoralize her.

